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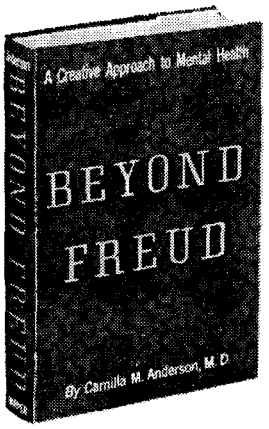

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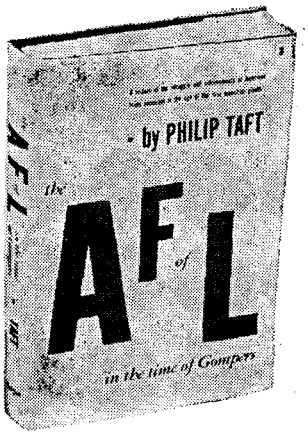

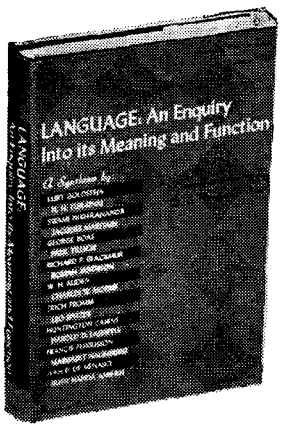

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Edited by JULIAN PARK, *Professor of European History and International Relations at the University of Buffalo*

Is the culture of Canada merely derivative—a synthesis of the cultures of Great Britain, France, and the United States, which surround it traditionally or geographically? No, say these writers, mostly Canadians, as they examine the cultural aspects of their life. They agree that Canadian culture has a character of its own.

However, the contributors here are not propagandists. Some of them are academic critics, representing universities from British Columbia to Quebec; others are workers in the field. In this frank and objective self-appraisal, they point out the steps being taken to improve and consolidate Canada's culture.

It is apparent that the development of a national culture has been more difficult in Canada than in other dominions. Many of the authors stress Canada as a land of "two solitudes"—a country where two cultures (French-Canadian and English-speaking Canadian) have developed separately. Noted too, are Canada's geographical situation and population distribution that have made communication difficult. Living next to a wealthy nation with 11 times her population has proved still another challenge to Canada in her search for self-identification.

The background necessary for each subject discussed here varies. The story of Canadian radio and music needs little history; that of the other arts and sciences must include some account of the traditions and struggles which produced them. To that extent, this book is history, but the writers have not hesitated to evaluate the present and discuss some of the difficulties that lie in the way of future progress.

Furnished with a selective bibliography, and with illustrations for the chapter on art, this book is a lively evaluation of the young culture of Canada reflecting faith and realistic optimism.

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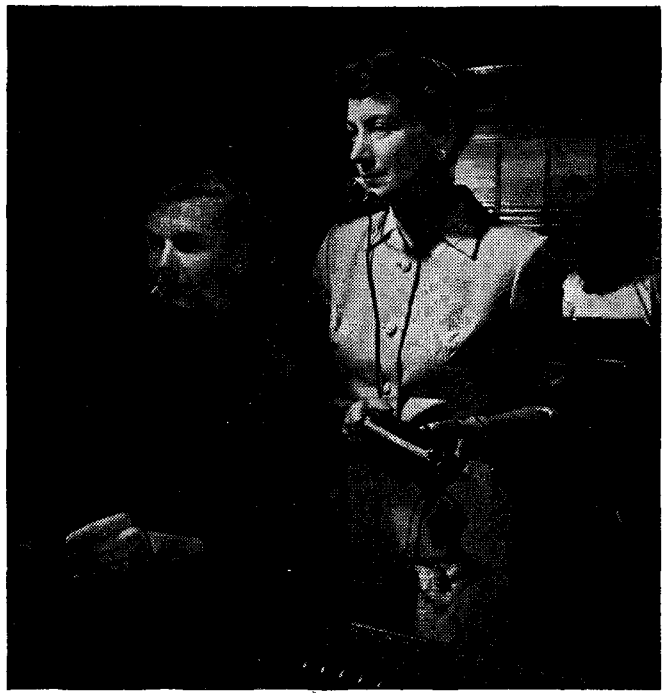

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 26 *Autumn, 1957* NUMBER 4

Editorial: An Experiment

We are devoting the larger part of this Autumn issue to a single proposition: What, in this tough and complex world of ours today, is a tenable faith that can bring sober sustenance to the many of us who are deeply troubled and perplexed by the various specters of the mid twentieth century?

When it was first suggested at a meeting of the Editorial Board that we present a collection of essays setting forth expressions of personal philosophies—"faiths to live by"—the fear was expressed that the result might be tinged with an evangelical coloring that little suited the intent and the character of the magazine. Much of the "inspirational literature" of our time, it was pointed out, consists of platitudinous or even specious psychological reassurance, blended with obscurantist religiosity. Would not some of this taint adhere to such a number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR?

Two sound answers to this question seemed immediately evident. One was that the tone and quality of these essays would depend inevitably upon the contributors—and this was our responsibility in issuing the invitations. The second concerned the validity of the plan itself. In this connection, we decided that statements from people of genuine intellectual stature and achievements about the personal faiths (not necessarily religious) by which they live were as pertinent to the avowed purpose of the magazine as any proposition of which we could conceive.

Another important doubt was raised when it was proposed that we invite only people sixty years of age or over to contribute. Surely, it was reasoned, we have already heard the older prophets

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—and, at any rate, they have not led us to any promised land. Again, however, it was decided that we should proceed—being careful not to solicit those whose personal creeds had already been widely circulated—on the conviction that those who have lived threescore or more years of demonstrable achievement and wisdom must, *ipso facto,* have something to say worth the attention of those of us who are younger.

There are disappointments to report. With the single exception of Humayun Kabir, whom we are glad to welcome to our pages, all the contributors are American by birth or naturalization. We had hoped to have a wide distribution of nationalities represented, but our invitations to England, France, Italy and other countries were not accepted—save in one case. H. M. Tomlinson, the distinguished British writer, agreed to contribute, but was prevented by illness. Another cause for regret is the loss of the essay promised by Maurice Sterne, outstanding American painter. Mr. Sterne died during the summer, just before his eightieth birthday.

It will be observed that the forms of these essays vary as much as the content. This is highly satisfactory to us who planned this issue with the desire that there be no rigid restrictions, no formularized procedure.

The results of the experiment follow. The Editors very much hope that AMERICAN SCHOLAR readers will express their opinions. We have contemplated the possibility—if the reception of this number is favorable—of later, at intervals of a year or more, following this introductory collection with comparable essays from those of forty to sixty years of age, and from those in their twenties and thirties. We are, therefore, particularly interested in securing as many evaluations of this issue as we can.

HIRAM HAYDN

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R. L. Duffus

FORTY YEARS AGO LAST SPRING a journalist about forty years younger than I am today wrote a short article for the *New Republic* entitled "Progress: 1917." In this article he argued that the belief widely entertained in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that the world would automatically go on getting better and better without much help from its temporary tenants and boarders was not necessarily sound. The somewhat young journalist of those days had watched the terrible march of the Four Horsemen across Europe and was writing in the shock of our own involvement in the prevailing struggle.

We had hoped much. We—that is to say, our generation—had accomplished much. We were on the way to a more abundant material life, to an unaccustomed leisure, to an improved and better educated democracy, to greater freedom. The world of early 1914 had been for many millions an increasingly bright one. The world of 1917 was no longer bright; it was lurid, and the light we had was in the flash of guns, the flames of burning airplanes with the pilots still strapped into them, the fire from flame throwers and crumbling cities vivid against the sky.

The four decades since 1917 have made the tragedy of that year seem almost trivial. Cities were being destroyed at that time, nations were being impoverished, some millions of human beings were dying of unnecessary wounds and diseases, but there was no doubt in our minds that recovery would come as soon as the fighting ended.

And now what have we? We have achieved much and we have lost much. We have added to the length of life. We have made liv-

✪ R. L. DUFFUS is a member of the editorial staff of the New York *Times*. He is the author of *The Innocents at Cedro, The Valley and Its People, Non-Scheduled Flight* and other works of fiction and nonfiction.

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ing more comfortable throughout the Western World. We are partly the slaves and partly the masters of new inventions and improvements on old inventions. We can turn a switch and bring in folly and ignorance as well as wisdom over a distance of thousands of miles. We can travel at something like the speed of sound. We look outward toward the moon and the planets with a speculative eye, imagining that some day our children will cross that new frontier.

These changes in our collective life have arisen out of one aspect of that life—that is to say, what we call science. But we have realized a little too late what science is. Science is the beauty and the coldness of absolute space. By its very nature it cannot turn aside from its objective. It saves a life or takes a life with the same cool nonchalance. It eases pain or inflicts torture with calmness and precision. It moves toward creating heaven on earth, and with the same majestic, implacable pace experiments with hell.

Under these circumstances, some of us who were here before the century are asked what faith we hold for the future. Let us imagine that we had been asked this question twenty years ago. It would have been easier to answer then, for no cynicism could have projected the image of the H-bomb, and with it the vision of total destruction, upon our horizons. We might then have feared that wars of an increasingly destructive nature would continue. Many persons argued at that time that human nature is inherently pugnacious and selfish and would never be at peace with itself. Some even contended that it should not be. But the concept of a possible universal suicide did not enter our minds.

So now we are asked what is our faith. It would be easier to say what is our hope. Our hope surely demands the deep condemnation of any persons in any country who would invoke as conquerors the new weapons which are not so much the enemies of our enemies as the enemies of the human race. Our hope would be that the genius in mankind that disassembled the atom can somehow manage to dissect the human soul and neutralize the evil that is in it.

We stand, at any rate, at the absolute turning point in all human history. There has been nothing like this before. Prometheus has never before had this kind of fire to play with. Nor have his vitals

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been exposed to the kind of vulture whose wings now darken our skies.

What is our faith then? I mean, of course, what is my own faith? I cannot speak for the faith of other persons even though we recite the same religious or secular creeds. The words we use mean different things to different speakers and listeners. My faith, then—possibly a survival of the nineteenth century—is a belief in the purposefulness of the universe, a belief which I have been unable to shake off. I cannot believe that life originated spontaneously and without some kind of premeditation, nor can I believe that the scene through which life moves and of which it is a part is unpremeditated.

To be sure, this universe seems to many both distinterested and wise men to require no action of a creator. Yet even now, when man is actually playing the role of a creator, dismantling old elements and manufacturing new elements, it is still difficult to believe that he is, like the eternal rocks or the somewhat less eternal oceans, a chemical accident. Thus, although I do not know what the purpose is or what force in the universe itself has a purpose, I do believe in a purpose in the universe.

I believe also in a life instinct and in the power of this instinct over all the forces of the modern hell toward which we often seem to be moving.

Man has lived through the most prodigious discouragements, as Thornton Wilder somewhat lightheartedly pointed out in the play entitled *The Skin of Our Teeth*. He has been discouraged by glacial periods, by excessive heat, by lack of food, by disease and by the universal fact of physical death. He has, however, kept on. He has more than kept on. One could almost shut his eyes and place a finger on the map, east or west, anywhere out of the polar regions, and be sure of finding a population increasing at the rate of close to 3 per cent a year.

In short, the human race, in spite of all discouragements, in spite of all fears, in spite of doubts, in spite of a confusion of doctrines, wants passionately to go on living. This is the sort of faith that cannot be put into written or printed words. It is instinctive and deep.

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But I believe this kind of faith kindles in our hearts an undying fire. The human race shows no sign of desiring to commit suicide. I believe it will arise in passion against any recognizable group which requests it to commit suicide or which follows policies that are suicidal or which ignorantly turns, like the moths, toward the destroying flame.

If we can get this far with our faith, if we can recognize a kind of intestinal wisdom in mankind, a wisdom which is, nevertheless, spiritual also, we need not despair. It may well be that man's most glorious days are ahead of him, the Golden Age yet to come.

By believing—unscientific though this doctrine may be—we may make it so. That has always been the way with faith. Faith creates the things in which it believes. It may, if the faith is strong enough, change them from illusions into realities.

We need an activist faith. This is no age in which to sit and contemplate our navels. It is no age in which to go out into the wilderness to worship God. It is, indeed, an age in which that kind of worship would be blasphemy. But the faith that will work for peace, for freedom and for democracy, in the market place, in legislative halls, in the voting booth and at the dreariest of conference tables, is still a kind of energy that can remake the world.

This much I do believe, even in the partial darkness that prevails as we go toward a dawn that has been late in coming. The test of a faith, perhaps, is that it shall not be too easy. That is the test that we have to meet this year, forty years after the United States entered the First World War.

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Henry Beetle Hough

THE TERMS OF ONE'S FAITH have to be here and now. That is why he who can remember well the years before World War I may travel light indeed; experience and observation have taken from him one bit of illusion or of faith after another. Yet it is not so much that disillusion has been an uninterrupted process during most of his life as it is that he retains an old standard of values and an old vision.

Speaking for myself, until I die I shall be conditioned by the failure of the bright promise of that time when mankind seemed to have reached the threshold of good will, enlightenment and lasting decency. When I went to school as a boy the new world was pointed out to me and I could see it plain.

Newer generations are led to think of that time as one of green innocence and folly, now outgrown; but it is the spirit of a young faith that has been outgrown, and the folly is compounded in many ways. It is even written that the period I knew in my youth was one of complacency, but it was not complacent; there was far too much earnestness for that.

Ever since then, to see the better world at all, I have had to look backward and not forward. Who can hold out any bright prospect for the race of men? Not I, who have been witness to the recurring willingness of most men to hold to one belief and act upon another, to relinquish principle whenever pressed by the token of an accepted symbol, to take refuge in words from the occasion of a hard decision. And what a danger words have become now that they are

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instruments of deception, policy and shrewd suggestion rather than a means of communication and art!

My difficulty is not one of discovering the tenets of a faith that will hold against all attacks, past and present; the Christian ethic is completely satisfying. My difficulty is in believing that men will, this side of any discernible horizon, abide by that ethic. Not to believe in men is an ill thing; I know that, but my skepticism persists.

Therefore it is a lean and sinewy conviction that is left to me: as utter a conviction of the eternal truth and value of the Christian ethic as when some of its significance was first taught to me long ago, and a readiness at any moment to find that professors of the faith have again abandoned it for some practical objective nearby or in the middle distance.

I am aware that mysticism exerts a deep appeal in a day and an hour such as this, especially to those who feel themselves starkly caught. Not a few honest and intelligent men and women are able to refer present and earth-bound troubles to a harmony outside and beyond, eternal, safe at some final appointment. But it seems to me that mysticism of whatever kind, or the refuge of dogma and ritual, simply add to the overpowering problem. So long as one feels that all will come right in the end in another world, it is easier to excuse evasions and surrenders in this one.

I believe deeply in the complete freedom of faith and in the benefits of diverse viewpoints, and I would not seek to persuade a single person from the assuagement he may find in divinely or eternally ordained standards or possibilities or expectations. That is why my own faith is stated personally and, by intention, in bleak simplicity.

For myself I live in the conviction that this is our only world and our only life, and the acceptance of man as one with nature brings no disappointment but, on the contrary, a genuine content and satisfactory glimpses of the requirements and opportunities of living in a natural world. To act upon any other belief, it seems to me, is to miss the real challenge, to fail in the whole justification for man's superior wisdom and capacity.

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Moreover, I think that this is the mature view, and maturity is, to say the least, a merit to which my generation should lay claim. I am moved by these words of Irwin Edman's: "Maturity consists in trying to discover the conditions by which men may make the most of what is given." Can we afford to fail in this?

When Huxley wrote in his letter to Kingsley of the sanctity of belief, he spoke from the conviction of a scientist in a new scientific age. His words were earnest and clear but as bare as winter: "The universe is one and the same throughout; and if the condition of my success in unravelling some little difficulty of anatomy or physiology is that I shall refuse to put faith in that which does not rest upon sufficient evidence, I cannot believe that the great mysteries of existence will be laid open to me on other terms. It is no use to talk to me of analogies and probabilities." Since then the world has grown older and more seasoned in experience and emotion, and what seemed to so many a ringing statement of doubt may easily be reframed as a ringing statement of affirmation. We should not fail in the advantage of our own years, nor should we let ourselves be satisfied with less than the full maturity which is a wider heritage.

I have spoken of a failure of hope, but this is not because of any admission of man's inability to solve the problems of humanity through the exercise of intelligence. It is primarily because of disbelief in man's willingness or courage, when he works in or through groups such as societies, political parties or nations, to combine intelligence and the Christian ethic. When the pinch comes, he acts upon expediency.

There is a great cleavage between what men can bring themselves to do as individuals and what they are willing to support, even with their heart's blood, as members of a group. A reasonably normal man respects life, but a nation kills 78,000 human beings in a single moment at Hiroshima. A man avoids harmful substances, but a nation considers solemnly how much terrible poison can be discharged into the atmosphere with any remaining chance of safety for the human race.

These instances are typical, not unique. They characterize an

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age in which faith yields to words that are often so deliberately contrived as to be weapons against humanity.

Yet I do not believe in defeat, for the Christian ethic does not admit of surrender, and the eventual good, though never to be fully realized, remains an honest goal. And I do not see how it can be approached or how the behavior of men in groups can be raised to the level of Christian concepts except by the determination of individuals to accept the sense of responsibility and obligation associated with the legend of Puritanism.

But this commitment is not taken under the awe of a distant and terrible God, or pursued to ecstasies of guilt and wrestling of conscience. I see it, again using Irwin Edman's words, in the light of "a candid and unashamed naturalism," and its reward not credit in any other world but peace in this one.

We cannot excuse ourselves from being grown up and realistic in our faith. To live with beliefs directed toward so remote a future, and even then toward partial gains if any at all, may seem a harsh choice; but one accepts what one can see as the truth, and looks toward a real gain, no matter how far or uncertain, rather than an imagined one. Moreover, this choice is no harder to accept than the fact that life is lived within the settled bounds of birth and death. There is no outcome but one for the human adventure, and although the mystic envisions another life beyond, he too must accept the limitations of this one, and if he does not live it as an adventure he is the poorer in so many respects that they can hardly be counted.

Even death is part of the principle of recurrence, and recurrence is exciting to contemplate. The current of humanity flows on. Will we enrich it in our time? Here is all possible scope for poetry, emotion, sentiment, endeavor, service, achievement, joy and pity. I find myself believing fiercely in life, and defending life; not only the life of man, but the indivisible principle.

One sees not only what man has done to man, but what man has done to the richness of this natural world, to nature itself, to the community of all life. Once the glib word was "conquest," then "development" and now "management." I have hatred for the

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official, responsible for the preservation of natural resources, who speaks of the annual "harvest" of wild animals. Man is not against nature, but of nature, and forgets that fact not only at the peril of his material condition on earth but at the peril of his spirit.

Not every man can be or should be a Thoreau, but the teaching of Thoreau is good for every man. The need of living is not a bare consistency as if the pieces of a puzzle had been cut in advance, waiting to be put together; the need is for a warm, responsive and diverse humanity.

These things run strongly in my faith, and the events of my lifetime kindle it to new heat. I think I have to find a common ground with other men, and they with me, only in objectives and principles, for the whole fulfillment of men is in their individual spirit.

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A Set of Seasons

DONALD HALL

He suspects that the seasons
Are not as they should be. How
Is he to know that seasons
Are not to be suspected?

This gelatin of air
And splendid haze infers
Mistaken complements
To circumstance and phrase.

How should he come to know?
And how to score the seasons,
When he is making them
Orange as grass, backwards?

Sir, the beginnings of pleasure
Erupt from green and orange,
Scored in the head as grass,
Seasonal, unsuspected.

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Humayun Kabir

SENSITIVE MINDS IN ALL AGES and countries have been troubled and perplexed by the problems of the world in which they were born. Even periods which in retrospect seem eras of great prosperity and promise were not free from such feelings. Men have always looked before and after, and rebelled against the existing order. But for their divine discontent men would not have been men, and there would have been no progress in human affairs.

Subjectively, all periods have been periods of crisis, but the modern age is also objectively a specially critical time. Never before has the world been so unified as today. Never before have problems been so global in their scope. In earlier ages, different societies lived in comparative isolation and ignorance of one another. One nation could progress while others remained static or even suffered retrogression. Today men are, for good and evil, linked in one common fate. A threat to one community is a threat to the entire human race.

The unification of the world is due to advances in science and technology. They have increased immensely man's capacity to produce goods and services to meet his needs. By improving means of communication, they have almost annihilated space and time and literally made all peoples one another's neighbors. Simultaneously they have led to the invention of terrible weapons of destruction which threaten the very existence of man.

Improved means of communication have broken down barriers in a double sense. Physical movement is much quicker and easier than in the past. Increasingly, different societies are coming into closer contact with one another. Even more important is the facility of communication in the world of ideas. Formerly, an idea took years if not decades to spread in the country of its origin. Today an idea can be broadcast throughout the world instantaneously.

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Mass media of communication have accelerated the movement of ideas and enormously increased the volume of their pressure. Indoctrination has a far wider influence today than we are generally prepared to admit. The pressure of propaganda is seen in its most naked form in totalitarian countries. We should not, however, underestimate the existence of such pressure in a democracy.

The enormous expansion in contacts between men of different countries, different faiths, different political outlooks and different economic beliefs has led to far-reaching changes in men's attitudes toward one another and the universe. In the past, men generally accepted without question the faith and the institutions of their fathers. Society was static and duties were defined by one's station in life. Today all this has changed. Different systems of beliefs and customs contend for a man's loyalty. What one community accepts as an article of faith, another rejects as a superstition. These contacts and comparisons have shaken the beliefs which formerly sustained the individual. An immediate result is a world-wide weakening of traditional faith.

An increase in the number of doubters and skeptics has led to an increase in human unhappiness. To doubt is to make an effort. An attitude of skepticism involves a constant strain. All except the strongest natures are worn out under the strain of such continual effort. This explains why so many intellectuals finally seek shelter in authoritarian religious beliefs or dogmatic secular creeds.

The loss of faith is in itself a cause of spiritual discomfort, if not misery. In addition, there is also the misery which is born of the widening gap between expectation and achievement. In past ages, men were more reconciled to their stations in life. Those lower down in the social scale generally accepted their positions without resentment. Today, they no longer accept a social hierarchy as immutable or sacrosanct. Each man thinks that he is as good as anybody else. There has been an enormous expansion in material comforts, but the expansion in expectations has been greater still.

These problems of the modern world arise directly out of what is perhaps its greatest spiritual achievement. The recognition of the dignity of the individual, even more than the increase of knowledge, is the special glory of the modern age. For the first time in

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the history of the world, democracy has been accepted as a universal article of faith. Practice may still fall short of profession, but the acceptance of the ideal is itself a great advance. Democracy has brought with it the burden of individual responsibility. In a world where increasing knowledge makes adherence to accepted beliefs increasingly difficult, this burden weighs heavily on most men.

One thing alone is certain. Mankind cannot survive without ideals. Loss of faith is a more insidious disease than the worst of physical maladies. Anthropologists tell us of primitive tribes who die out simply because they have lost faith in their way of life. If the modern world is to survive, we must work for a revival of faith in values.

It is clear that this revival of faith cannot be a mere revival of past beliefs. Things could be taken on trust in a world where knowledge was circumscribed and mystery surrounded the life of everyday. Science has already solved many of these enigmas and is continually invading the region of the mysterious. The coexistence of different ways of life also makes uncritical acceptance of any faith more difficult. Modern man's ideals must therefore be based on intellectual acceptance. Rationality, not revelation, must govern his code of conduct.

The bewildering complexity of the modern age demands a faith that is rational in nature and universal in content. Those who are theists find in God a natural focus of universal meaning. Even those who are not believers may find purpose in the concept of human dignity. Truth, beauty and goodness are formulations of values larger and more permanent than the individual self. Identification with them inspires men to acts of supreme courage and sacrifice. Our knowledge of the external world is continually expanding. This must be matched by increasing knowledge about our own selves. Never has the Socratic dictum that knowledge is virtue been truer than today.

However far knowledge may go, there will always remain a core of mystery in the heart of things. Individuality is inviolate and demands regard for others. This, and not acquiescence in something which we regard as inferior, is true toleration. Anthropology, history and psychology teach us that what is aberration in one con-

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text may be the essence of wisdom in another. The multiplicity of beliefs, customs and institutions demands that however strongly we may feel that we are right, we must not overlook the possibility that we may in fact be wrong.

Rationality and toleration are necessary but by themselves not sufficient for the solution of the contemporary predicament. Our faith must be enriched by understanding and compassion if we are to go beyond the negative absence of evil to the positive realization of good. The increase of knowledge in the modern age has been accompanied by a decrease in the scope of imagination. This has led to abstract and intellectual judgment of men and affairs. Mere intellectual allegiance cannot, however, stand up against emotional upheavals. The unity of the human race is no longer open to question; but in spite of intellectual recognition of this fact, our emotional identification does not extend beyond the limits of our family or, at most, our nation. This explains why modern man has so often failed in moments of crisis in spite of his professions of loyalty to truth and justice. Imaginative identification based on compassion and understanding of our fellow men can alone build up the strength to resist the pull of parochial or sectional interests.

Scientific advancement has placed in man's hand the key to the solution of the problems of want and misery. It is now within our power to conquer hunger and disease. It is equally within our power to destroy human society and, indeed, the physical world. Knowledge as such is neutral. Whether our knowledge will be used for destruction or for creative purposes will depend upon the faith which inspires us. Our faith can no longer be based on revelation or mystery, but it must transcend the limitations of the self. A rational understanding of the nature of the external world and of the human personality, toleration for divergent points of view, and imaginative identification with our fellow men through understanding and compassion are the essential ingredients of a faith which alone can sustain our hopes in the troubled and complex world of today.

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Gerald W. Johnson

IF THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR has achieved his fell purpose by the time these lines meet the reader's eye, and has extracted from ten citizens over sixty years of age adequate reasons why they continue to live, this issue of the magazine will constitute the greatest demonstration of American ingenuity and inventiveness since the making of the atom bomb.

Of course I have phrased the subject more crudely than the editor did. A polite man, he would not bluntly ask us gaffers why we persist in cumbering the ground; he put it delicately by requesting each to explain the faith that is in him. But it comes to the same thing. A man's faith is his reason for continuing to be when he might his quietus make with a bare bodkin. So the correct reply is to give an adequate reason for one's current presence among the quick.

I doubt that it can be done. I know that it can be done in no more than nine of ten cases. I do not regard any reason as adequate unless it satisfies a considerable number of people, and I am aware that my reasons for continuing to live are satisfactory to nobody but me. "Every man is wanted, and no man is wanted much," is an illustration of Emerson's undue optimism. If a man beyond sixty can make himself wanted at all, he is fortunate and very unusual; as a rule, what he has to give to the world, he has already given, and what he may reasonably hope to receive from it, he has received. If it was not much either way, as is the case with most of us, his reasons for continued existence must be strictly subjective.

Still, they may be interesting. If Sieyès won a permanent niche in history by remarking *J'ai vécu,* some slight interest may attach

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to anyone else who has lived through the Terror. I can remember how strange it seemed to a small American boy that England no longer had a queen, when the death of Victoria was announced; and I can remember how strange it seemed to a graying man that England had a queen, when Elizabeth II was proclaimed. Between the two queens were two colossal wars, in the first of which I participated, and watched the other from the sidelines. I have seen an economic system that men thought as solid as the everlasting hills collapse into utter ruin. I have seen orthodoxy repudiated and heresy rampant over half the earth. I have seen the transit of four great men—in my time Wilson passed, Lenin passed, Roosevelt passed, Stalin passed. I have learned the name of Verdun and the name of Stalingrad. I have seen the gates of hell burst open and the seven vials of the wrath of God poured out upon the earth, and I have seen the Dragon chained up again. Which is by way of saying that I have existed from 1890 to 1957. So make room, M. l'Abbé—*moi aussi, j'ai vécu*!

But all that is over and done with. It offers no answer to the editor's question, but merely sharpens its point. Granting that my generation has been around and seen things, there still remains the question in the refrain of the old war-song, "Where do we go from here, boys, where do we go from here?" Or, as Alfred Noyes more melodiously phrased it, as asked by the aged Ben Jonson:

> Marlowe is dead, and Green is in his grave,
> And sweet Will Shakespeare long ago is gone!
> Our Ocean-shepherd sleeps beneath the wave,
> Robin is dead, and Marlowe in his grave.
> Why should I stay to chant an idle stave,
> And in my Mermaid Tavern drink alone?

Why, indeed? One answer, perhaps, is genealogical. I come of a long-lived tribe. One grandsire reached his ninety-second year, so if some oracle should tell me tomorrow that I shall see 1990 come in, I should not be altogether amazed. But—and this is the point that demands explanation—neither should I be appalled. It is not that I can hope to contribute anything of much value to the world if I live for another generation, and certainly I do not expect the world to reward me with either fame or fortune at this late date. Further-

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more, by now I know how well-informed was the Psalmist when he declared, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years"—or even five-score—"yet is their strength labor and sorrow."

Nevertheless, I should not be appalled if I knew I were fated to live to a hundred. For in two-thirds of a century I have learned that this is an infinitely curious world; practically every guess I have made about it so far has proved to be wrong, so I assume that if I should survive for another thirty years, still it would be in a state of perpetual astonishment. Well, astonishment may be linked with any of various emotions—disappointment, indignation, hatred, glee or exultation—but by one thing it is never accompanied, to wit, boredom; and I hold with Schopenhauer that of the two absolute evils in this world, pain and boredom, boredom is by far the worse.

So long as I am protected by ignorance of the real nature of the world—and that ignorance is plainly invincible—I cannot be overwhelmed by the worst of all afflictions, tedium. It is wonderful how much can be endured if one feels certain that things might be worse. A sentence of thirty years in prison rejoices the heart of a man who was in danger of being hanged; and the fact that the strength of old age is labor and sorrow cannot daunt one who is convinced that its weakness is the vacant heart and the vacant mind.

If I had all knowledge I might find it reasonable to toast the future in a beaker of cyanide; for in that case there could not possibly be anything new around the next corner, therefore no impelling reason to get to the corner. There are, in my opinion, some perfectly valid excuses for suicide—inoperable cancer, for instance, or the arrival of the police with a warrant correctly charging first-degree murder, or any other presage of physical death inevitable, slow and agonizing. But the strongest of such reasons would be the gift of complete knowledge of what this world is and why it is so; for the gift would bring with it a *tedium vitae* worse than the most malignant tumor. It is, to be sure, a strictly hypothetical reason, but sometimes men have believed, as the wits falsely accused Benjamin Jowett of believing, that "All there is to know, I know it;/ What I know not is not knowledge." And when the victims of this delusion resort to the noose or the gas oven they should be ap-

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plauded rather than condemned. They have reason to do it; and besides, such a suicide removes a threat to the rest of us.

For I know now that it is superficial thinking to accept the widespread opinion that the woes of the world are attributable, for the most part, to the fact that our leaders know so little. The inexhaustible fountain of evil is the fact that they know so much that isn't so. To attain this realization took me approximately forty years after receiving my license to acquire an education—which is the true description of the Bachelor of Arts degree—but I am not abashed, seeing that the world has had the same truth before it for twenty-three centuries and hasn't learned it yet. Socrates' remark that he was wise because he knew that he knew nothing was made four hundred years before the birth of Christ, but it is still ignored.

In the month of May, 1939, Senator Borah knew that there would be no war in Europe. In 1956 President Eisenhower knew that the crisis was past in the Middle East just four days before the flames of Gehenna broke out around Suez. In 1957 Secretary Dulles knows that we are winning the cold war against communism. In view of these items, no American should wonder that in India every sophomore knows that the South Carolinians lynch seven Negroes every morning before breakfast, or that the sophomores in Russia know that Henry Ford is a Jew, that Eisenhower is a lackey of Wall Street, and that the editorial policy of the *Presbyterian Standard* is dictated by the Pope.

So when a man who knows all the answers, or even most of them, hangs himself, I incline to the opinion that he has taken the only course consistent with reason and sound public policy. By the same token, when a man insists on giving all the answers—as, for example, by asserting that we have no need to learn any more about Red China, or communism in general—I incline to the opinion that he ought to hang himself, as a measure of social sanitation.

To me, however, all this is of academic interest only. Remote indeed is the danger that I shall ever know enough to become a public menace by failing to realize how much I don't know, so I am free to pursue information without the slightest worry that I shall acquire too much, even if my life should be spared for another thirty years.

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For instance, it was quite recently that I learned that *dour* rhymes with *poor* and not with *sour*. I have not yet learned why, for it seems obvious that in any well-regulated world it would rhyme with *sour*. But there you are—this item of information is not only interesting, it is amusing, another bit of evidence supporting Pope Julius' dictum, *quantilla sapientia regitur mundus*.

At that, I refuse to concede that His Holiness was cynical. I think, rather, that he was complacent. I believe that Giammaria Ciocchi del Monte knew that in a world that was wisely governed he never would have been Pope, just as I suspect that in a properly conducted world I might not have survived to the age of sixty. What of it? If the world is ruled with little wit, neither of us is responsible and we might as well enjoy it.

My mistake with reference to *dour* was, however, simply a case of mispronunciation; I had long known what the word meant, for I was raised in a Calvinistic environment. There is another word that I find much more difficult, and I should like to have some twenty or thirty years to devote to the effort to translate it. It was a favorite of Aristotle—or so I am told by Theodor Gomperz, for my Greek is nonexistent—and in the original it is Αὐτάρκεια, transliterated, not translated, as *autarkeia*. It is commonly supposed to be related to *autarchy* but that, according to Webster, is due to its confusion with another word.

Gomperz translates *autarkeia* by "self-sufficiency," but he appends a warning that this rendering is inadequate. The idea of independence is certainly present, but much more is included. The idea of freedom is present, but much more. Apparently what Aristotle had in mind was not merely the state of being free and independent, but the state of being able to be free and independent.

They are not identical. Millions of Americans who were made free and independent by George Washington have not been able to remain so. Released by George of Mount Vernon from the tyranny of George of England, they have promptly fallen under the tyranny of their bosses or their wives or their pastors. And that reincarnation of Jeremiah, the Prophet Wylie, avers that the whole nation lies under the worse than Neronian tyranny of Mom. This would suggest that George of Mount Vernon wasted a good deal of

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his labor, for there is small profit in making people free if they simply can't bear it.

All available evidence indicates that this Washington was one American, and perhaps the only one, who was able to be free. I have no proof that he ever encountered the word *autarkeia,* but everything we know about him indicates that he had the quality. Possibly Benjamin Franklin had it too, although he would have laughed and denied the imputation; but as regards all the rest there remains a measure of doubt. Hamilton, for instance, never wanted it; he preened himself on his slavery to the idiotic code that sent him to his death. Jefferson and John Adams, both Greek scholars, knew the word and sought the thing diligently, but with only partial success. Emerson preached it, but his metaphysical chains clanked dismally throughout the sermon. Whitman, I believe, suspected its existence but without having the least idea of its nature; and Thoreau's "quiet desperation" is an explicit denial that he had it.

To come down to the period of my own life, the greatest American I have ever seen was Wilson, the strongest one the second Roosevelt. Like Jefferson and Adams, they both strove mightily to attain the ability to be free and, of course, succeeded in a measure far beyond the capacity of any other men of their time; but I cannot believe that either quite came abreast of the Squire of Mount Vernon in this respect, perhaps not up to Poor Richard. Yet while I have known many men whom I regard as better or happier or more successful than either Wilson or Roosevelt, none of my time came nearer being free men.

My estimate of the situation, therefore, is that the thing has been done once, possibly done a second time, and almost done many times, twice within the period of my own existence. I am bound to admit the possibility that what has been done once may be done again, and it follows that on rounding the very next corner I may encounter an American who not only has freedom but is able to sustain it. If I should meet such a one, I might acquire enough understanding of the meaning of *autarkeia* to translate it into English—which would be, for me, a triumph of colossal dimensions.

This is a reason for living that I find sufficient, although as I

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confessed at the start, I do not expect it to satisfy anybody else. Certainly the odds against the encounter are tremendous. I do not know how many citizens the United States has had since 1776, but as there are 160 millions now alive, the total must be astronomical. Since in that multitude there have been but two, perhaps only one, of the type I seek, it is evident that Diogenes, looking for a specimen with hair in the palm of his hand, had an easier quest.

But what of that? The search itself is always astonishing, frequently amusing, and occasionally inspiring—fatiguing, too, and at times painful, but dull only on those days when I allow myself to forget what it is all about. Complete success, although it is not seriously to be expected, is not quite impossible, while entertainment on a gratifyingly high level is virtually assured, even though the physical frame should endure for thirty years or so.

Thus while I admit that from your standpoint there is no convincing reason why I, or any but a small number of other men past sixty, should continue to live, I cheerfully insist that from my standpoint the reasons are good and sufficient. Hence I must politely decline all invitations to suicide, not as denying their logic, but simply because I am too busy to arrange it.

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For Ezra Pound

JOHN CIARDI

not arrogant from habit
but furious from perception
Section: Rock-Drill

Bagged for glory, then—a goat-saint lolling
satyr-drunk and smiling loose-lipped
Heavens and Earths, the eyes rolling
ecstasy and maunder, the beard flipped
to glory and the wattle visible under it. Die
(giggle) dying (giggle) but not dead
(by a damn sight) not dead yet (sigh)
but only cracked and queer with a head
full of the reason for wine, that tomb-taste
in the lees, a most like-life. And he fell
furious to perception. From the waist
up, a Heaven. From the waist down, a Hell
too mouldy and gluey for riot, and so
a kind of Heaven under, that Heaven above
being stormed and noisy as Hell. It is hard to know
which dying takes a sot-saint's love.
To stink and look crazy and yet to groan
from deep as the flesh is; that begins.
To burble bloody froths yet clown;
that continues. To have two skins
on one back and be man and beast;
that is nature in nature. To be is all.

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To lie fervent as yeast
  at the root of bread and taste gall;
that is nature in an order not
  necessarily final but enduring. As catch can.
Saints are no bib-and-tucker. What
  do you think deaths are? The man
dies with his thoughts on, loused in his own
  stink, and bagged for Heaven burning.

O Reverend, of this hair and meat and bone
  render thy Christ his pomp and his returning.

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René Fueloep-Miller

FAITH WAS THE MOTHER TONGUE OF MY MIND, the language which taught me to name the first things in life, to spell them out correctly, to know where to place the accent, and to learn the syntax, which determines the proper sequence of action.

From the very beginning faith revealed to me an abiding reality which exceeds in scope the dimensions of sense experience and the limitations of pure reason. It unsealed for me the inner reality of the soul and the reasoning of the heart. Above all, faith illuminated for me the ultimate truth of a great unity in which all the fragmentary parts of outer and inner experience—the seen and the unseen—merge into a meaningful whole. It showed me a higher reality where the finite touches the infinite, eternity transcends time, and the divine mystery of what lies beyond permeates all the concrete events of life. I felt God.

The language of faith speaks in symbols, metaphors and parables. It often employs paradoxes to convey the incomprehensibilities of an all-embracing truth. I learned that these images are not merely figurative signs which point to something else, but form an immediate part of our reality, being no less real than the tangible and comprehensible things that surround us. The fall, the drama of Job's ordeals, Christ's parable of the lilies, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the prince of darkness, the lived parable of the temptation in the desert, the majesty of the cross—all this expresses the very essence of shared human experience. My whole orientation rests on this belief which enables me better to decipher the secret signs of the manifold happenings in my life, and to grasp more clearly what life did to me and what I did with it.

I grew up in a pharmacy where the suffering of our town, in fact the suffering from all over the countryside up to the distant

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mountain ranges, confronted me. As a lad I began to write, and, lured by the youthful *hybris*, I planned a cosmic poem that would solve all questions of life and death. Eager for recognition, I felt that mine was a higher vocation than to slave in the pharmacy, and I turned my back on the security of home to lead for a while the life of a vagabond. I wound up spending my nights on the hard benches of the boulevards and taking my meals with beggars in a soup kitchen. Consumed by intellectual pride, I pinned all my hopes on the completion of my poem. Then I suffered a crushing blow. I lost my precious manuscript on the tramway and was unable to retrieve it. Though my dreams were shattered by this ironic stroke of fate, my intimate contact with the outcasts helped me gain a truer insight into the havoc that poverty and wretchedness inflict on men.

In the course of my psychiatric studies I worked for a while in the secluded world of a city for the insane, where streets, shops, movies, dances and church services were adapted to the needs of the mentally deranged. There I shared with the unfortunate the unforgettable experience of the arrival of spring, and partook of the excitement and strange illumination which the awakening of nature produced in the world of the insane. The rites of spring in this distorted setting were like a prayer which rose from the abyss.

At the outbreak of the First World War I volunteered and was assigned to the medical staff. My task consisted in searching deserted battle fields for the wounded, the dying and the dead. Confronted with the unheroic side of war, I experienced human helplessness in the face of anguish and pain. The last words of dying men rang in my ears, and the glare of extinguishing eyes haunted me. And I recognized in the suffering enemy the suffering brother.

Later, struck down by serious illness, I myself tasted the agony of physical distress and was brought to the threshold of death. Then again I was torn from the security of a well-established existence and embarked on a long, restless journey through countries, nights and years, sharing the rootlessness of so many other refugees.

To all the imposed afflictions I added the suffering which I myself inflicted. Frailty and errors caused me to commit sins of omission and to do wrong when I knew what was right. The voice of

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conscience, the guide to lucidity, made me keenly aware of the struggle which heaven and hell waged in my soul.

The bounty of life brought me much happiness in manifold guises. I received the precious gift of true friendship, which helped me to grow and unfold. My wife's love and the radiance of my children brought me the finest joy. This life of inner fulfillment was suddenly darkened by the deepest of sorrows—the loss of a beloved child, a loss which tears the loom of life so that nothing remains as before, neither joy nor nature, neither toil nor rest.

But amidst the vicissitudes of life I heard the call in my mother tongue: watch and listen. I learned the lesson to accept life as it is given, to accept it as a challenge which helps to discern truth and enables us better to identify the Self with the suffering of others, and thus to understand the real brotherhood on earth which evolves from the common lot of suffering.

Faith instilled in me the conviction that whatever I gained and achieved was given by grace, that the proud claims of the I are delusions, and that humility, far from being merely a noble gesture, is the only realistic attitude, since it places the Self where it naturally belongs, both in its relation to others and to God. Faith taught me the correct grammatical order, that is, that giving always precedes possessing, for it is truly "by giving that we receive."

Most important of all, faith urged me to be fully and constantly awake, and I found that love is the prerequisite for such awakeness. Only love endows us with a complete awareness of the You and the others; through love alone can we reach out to them and up to God, and grasp the ultimate spiritual reality of living. Therefore, sin, whatever form it may take, is in essence a defiance of the spirit of love. "Damnation is the sorrow that one cannot love," said Dostoevsky. And as it is expressed in the Lord's Prayer, forgiveness for our trespasses can be asked and will be granted only when we are in a state of love and ready to forgive those who trespass against us. The essence of faith and the revelation of the life of Christ and St. Francis can be summed up with one word: love.

To live up to this truth was not always easy. I often gave way to temptations. I hid with Adam and would not answer when the Lord called out, Where art thou? The light beckoned to me, but my

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soul was darkened and I comprehended it not. I rebelled with Job, and my soul turned into the Karamazovs' tavern, where Ivan disputed Alyosha's belief. And I often dozed off on the Mount of Olives, unable to wake while the resurrected Christ was crucified over and over again. There were times when the roar of the voices of Babel almost drowned out the sound of my mother tongue. In such moments my troubled soul suffered the torments of purgatory.

Once in such a dark period I decided to retreat so as to gain renewed strength and clarity through prayer and meditation. I set out for the unique republic of hermits on Mount Athos. Here I found a state which had kept its constitution of renunciation unchanged throughout a thousand years, while the world around it had been subjected to incessant turmoil and changes. I found a community of four thousand men who had left wealth, rank and worldly concerns behind to experience *metanoia* (the transformation of the whole man) and to dedicate their lives and thoughts to the contemplation of the divine. I shared for a while their strict exercises in the cenobitic monasteries and their solitary devotion in secluded huts on rocky cliffs. My greatest gain, which has sustained me ever since, was the practice of "the hours of silence," for out of the silence an abiding truth would make itself audible.

The social and political experiences in our time convinced me that faith is also the great issue on which depends the moral and social "to be or not to be" of the human race. After World War I, disheartened by the failure of all the peace conferences and disillusioned by the weakness of secular pacifism, I came in touch with Gandhi's teaching and his movement of nonviolence. Here was a spiritual leader, a Hindu, who taught and practiced the religious law of love and truth: *Ahimsa,* the victory over the world by love, and *Satyagraha,* the truth that results in the disarming of evil by good. Neither before nor afterward have I come across a historical movement which molded my own socio-political credo as decisively as Gandhi's experiment, which took a religious tenet as the basis of statesmanship and erected upon it a huge practical movement that succeeded in freeing 300 million men and put India on the map.

Later, during my years in Soviet Russia, I witnessed what happened when men and society are deprived of the spiritual values of

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religious faith. I watched on the spot and in full action the militant Communist attempt to abolish God, to wipe out the values of religious faith and to replace them with a godless gospel and the shifting values of expediency. I observed that their totalitarian doctrine did not arrive at unfaith and disbelief but created instead a substitute religion with man-made idols. It resulted in crushing the dignity and freedom of man, and in enslaving the creative spirit. The degradation of man which was practiced in Soviet Russia I found likewise in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, where the deification of "the will to power," "the superstate" and "the pure racial body" were substituted for faith in God. I then realized that the deepest urge in human nature is to believe in something that gives life purpose and meaning. Man simply cannot bear the arbitrary intellectual void of unfaith, and in his frantic search for a greater cause in which to invest his faith, dedication and loyalty, he succumbs to pseudo religions which worship man-gods. For the true alternative to religion is not atheism but idolatry. This holds true also for the free world, where the yearning for ethical contentment is giving way to a craving for material satisfaction, and where utilitarianism has led to an increasing value-blindness concerning the spiritual meaning of life.

Apart from the impact of faith on my personal life, I was of course eager to define for myself the role of religion in the development of humanity. From my studies of the history of thought I concluded that in all the great Eastern and Western cultures religious values express the essence of thousands of years of human insight and experience. They have been formulated independently by the most advanced teachers and leaders of humanity at different times, in different places, but always with the same genuine conviction. Thanks to men of faith—sages, seers, saints and martyrs—these ethical values have passed the reality test of having been lived by and died for.

When I came to review the major stages of our Western culture I found that everything we are proud of—our striving for social justice, our respect for the sacredness of the individual, our concern with human welfare on a global scale—was initially preached and practiced by men of faith. They were the first fighters for the

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rights of men, the first champions of the poor; they deemed all races and nations equal; they urged the liberation of the slaves.

The religious pursuit of the divine kindled the finest works of art. Faith inspired the heavenward motion of heavy masses of stone, surging in the arches and vaults of Gothic cathedrals. Faith guided the brush of Fra Angelico, Memling, Raphael, Dürer and El Greco. Michelangelo and other great sculptors chose the chisel for their tool to reveal the world of the divine.

Music as an act of worship, the Psalms, the Ambrosian and Gregorian chants, the whole singing faith of Christianity, gave birth to the finest pieces in Occidental music. Bach's fugues and cantatas, Handel's oratorios, and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* are all ringing prayers of men whose faith was deeply rooted in a confident trust in God and in the Redeemer.

The wealth of images in the Scriptures, the poetic voices of the Prophets, Christ's parables, the grandeur of his life and the struggle of his saintly followers, have enriched Western poetry with new means of expression and a new lyrical sensitivity. The life and songs of St. Francis, God's troubadour, revived the appreciation of nature and inspired the immortal poetry of Dante and Petrarch. To this very day the old affinity and close intimacy between faith and poetry remains intact to such an extent that one always recalls the other. Even in its most secularized form poetry keeps faith with its sacred heritage, and in the wilderness of utilitarian slogans it reminds us of the divine origin of the word.

The Christian belief which assigns a superior role to the individual soul of man prompted St. Augustine, the founder of "depth psychology," to delve into the *grande profundum hominis*—the great abyss called man—and to reveal the hidden world of the unconscious. His *Doctrina Christiana* was the earliest pedagogical textbook, and the monastic schools of the Benedictines laid the groundwork for the building of the universities later on.

And while the evolution of Christian culture confirmed my belief, my studies of the creative endeavors in our age of science did not shake it. I found that just those modern scientists who have penetrated deepest into the secret of man, matter and the universe humbly recognize the limitations of scientific investigation, and

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concede that the visible world borders everywhere on the invisible and can be fully understood only through an appraisal of this interconnection. Planck, Millikan, Einstein, Eddington, Sinnott, A. H. Compton, Lecomte du Noüy and many others agree that science does not possess a monopoly on the discernment of truth. The intuitive insight of moral experience, the more direct comprehension of the religious consciousness, the aesthetic vision of art, music and the metaphors of poetry—although different in approach—are roads to truth as legitimate as science.

Psychotherapists and social scientists of various schools came to the conclusion that Christian love, in the sense of compassion, is the prerequiste for mental balance and mature development of both the individual and society. And many of our leading educators have pointed out that higher education, which fails to eliminate the illiteracy in the moral values of our Judaeo-Christian heritage is doomed to failure, even if it attains high standards of intellectual learning.

This recognition by outstanding men in different fields of knowledge in itself defeats the point of view often advanced by secular humanists who want to supplant traditional religious values with an up-to-date scientifically devised code of ethics and a social "engineering" for the purpose of moral improvement. With all due respect for the tremendous achievements of science I feel that science alone is an inadequate guide for mankind. Its analytical method and abstract classifications do not apply to the uniqueness and living reality of man, and it does not answer the basic questions as to the meaning and conduct of life. Science, because of its inherent detachment, cannot be a guidepost for moral decisions which demand engagement. Its abstract statements may convince the intellect, but they lack the dynamic power to change the heart. As has been often pointed out, the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount cannot be deduced from or replaced by scientific formula.

I agree with those scientists who hold that only through a synthesis in which the scientific mind works in harmony with man's religious instinct and his sense of beauty can we hope for a brighter future.

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Howard Mumford Jones

YOUR LETTER ASKING FOR A STATEMENT of a "tenable faith" in the troubled twentieth century reached me in the course of what Mrs. Wharton would have called a motor flight through Europe. I write this paragraph on the shore of Lake Bled in Yugoslavia. Our aim was to visit the baths of Diocletian at Split, but it is too hot, and we are turning back to Alt Aussee in Austria.

As I think back over our trip from London, thence to Ostend and so on up the Rhine into Switzerland and finally here, three great impressions remain. One is how precarious is the hold of man on this planet. In the single instance of the Adriatic, Yugoslavia is a hard land, life is tough, and the people have to be hardy. The Dolomites confined man in this area to a few narrow valleys, and the sea binds him to a narrow strip of coast. Here as elsewhere, if he ascends a little beyond the thin strip of air wherein, like a fish, he must live confined, he perishes; if he falls into the water he cannot long survive. The majestic and implacable Alps remind one of the truth of Emerson's observation that all our civilization, our "progress," our culture, is but a little chipping and patching of the rude and terrible planet on which, in a few favored spots, we swarm.

The second of my impressions is, like the first, a platitude. What empires, what vanity, what alterations of religious faith! The Teuton and the Roman, the Celt, the Norman, the Pannonian, have come and gone, and now the Communist is here. The Holy Roman Empire of the German people has vanished; but so have its successors, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the empire of Kaiser Wilhelm der Zweite, and the New Rome of Mussolini. The gods of Greece and Rome, the heathen worship of dim tribesmen in the

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hills, the religion of Peter, the faith of Mohammed, the belief of Luther or Huss, have risen and clashed and fallen or sunk into a peaceful coexistence which, if one took seriously their declarations of changeless truth, is both absurd and a confession of theological bankruptcy.

My third impression is that of normal, careless, industrious human life. The slow oxen pull the cart from the hayfield, and the city laborer, in the evening, sits at a bench and drinks and forgets his toil. The lake by which I write is a body of water surrounded by swimmers, as it was, more or less, in the days of Diocletian, I suppose, though I do not know. These swimmers are not terrified by nature as our current poets and intellectuals declare, in view of modern physics, they are supposed to be. An engineer from an American freighter docked at Rijeka (where D'Annunzio once swaggered) explained over a beer his plan to bring his wife next trip, buy a motorcycle and enjoy a vacation. I suspect he was not troubled by the question of either Fiume or Trieste, and I suspect also that some Phoenician pilot centuries ago said the same sort of thing to a wandering philosopher in some wineshop in an Adriatic coastal town.

The continuity of human experience! Life and death, love and regret, seedtime and harvest, gain and loss, toil and repose, infancy, childhood, adulthood, old age—are they not the same in any age, under any ruler, with any religion? I find little in the conventional creeds to instruct me otherwise. Like Franklin I am prepared to worship God with any good man, but the antagonisms of the churches, particularly of the various Christian sects, seem to me the vainest of man's many inventions. Last week I attended a morning mass in the Cathedral of Cologne. It was celebrated by a high dignitary—perhaps a cardinal-archbishop—but I found in it little more or little less than I have experienced in the quietness of a Quaker meeting. In the one case the music soared gloriously to the great roof; in the other the silence was delicious and sweet. Two or three weeks ago I contemplated a Japanese Buddha the British have installed in the central court of the Victoria and Albert. To me he was a more impressive figure than the cardinal (if he was one) in all his scarlet splendor. Byron somewhere says that the pathos of human

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life is nowhere more movingly expressed than in the inscription not uncommon on Italian tombstones—So-and-so *implora pace*. The Buddha had no need to ask for peace; he had achieved it.

My faith, so far as I can define it in a word, is that of a stoic. The stoics have had, in some sense, a bad philosophical and a bad popular press. Stoicism calls up an image of Brutus condemning his sons to death, or of a Roman patrician elegantly opening his veins in the bath. My stoicism is not of this austere, this dramatic order. It lies nearer to what Santayana calls animal faith. It is what the Victoria and Albert Buddha embodies, what the eternal Dolomites and the unchanging mountain lakes symbolize, at least for me; and its confession of faith was written in the golden book of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. When Margaret Fuller exclaimed, "I accept the universe!" and Carlyle growled, "By God, she'd better," I suppose both aspects of my stoicism were exposed.

The reproach commonly brought against stoicism is that indifference is not faith. Nobody ever said it was. Acquiescence is not the same thing as indifference. No one can be quite indifferent to ugliness, cruelty and stupidity. But it does no good to quarrel with the universe. It is one thing to fight these evils in the name of common humanity (and the humanities), and another thing to complain perpetually about the absurdity, cruelty and illogic of being alive at all, something that, since the success of that confession of humane bankruptcy, *The Waste Land*, it has been fashionable among academic and intellectual circles to do. These same circles also teach the young the delights of finding fault with man and the immensities. On the whole, my scientific friends, who, by and large, know more about the universe than I do, do not thus complain. They have some confidence that the order of nature may be explicable, even if that order proves to be a-human. Their confidence is the confidence of Goethe, of Spinoza, of Marcus Aurelius—yes, and even of Aquinas and Schopenhauer. We presently give too much attention to persons who read and write in and for the samurai circles of the twentieth century; and to a degree beyond that of any earlier time, we mistake aesthetics for insight.

But I am supposed to discuss faith and not contradict myself (or seem to) by failing to acquiesce. The stoic faith, I repeat, for

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me is acquiescence, not indifference. Even the most dogmatic disciple of Sartre does not complain because he does not have eyes in the back of his head, or feelers like those of an insect. And yet how absurd that man, the paragon of beings, should be cut off from most of the sensations possible to animated nature! One of the favorite classics of this school, Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, dwells upon the horror of being an insect. What a world is known to the ant, the bee, the cockroach and the centipede! If Kafka's followers turn in disgust from man as a cockroach, by what logic do they applaud Blake as he thinks his way into the being of a tiger? The survival value and engineering design of the cockroach are at least the equal of, and may be superior to, those of the tiger, however bright he burns. The problem is not merely one of sensibility or "literature"; it is fundamental. Either you accept your human lot, with its imperfect physiological equipment and its precarious tenure on the planet, and do what you can with it; or you do not. *In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister.* Goethe is a wiser guide than modern aesthetes.

But how can I acquiesce in a universe in which man daily threatens to destroy himself? How, indeed? The destruction threatening us has a Miltonic, an Apocalyptic, an Old Testament grandeur, but I have no sooner written these sublime epithets than I realize how ancient is the threat of universal destruction, how venerable the spectacle of human folly. I shall do the little I can to work against destruction, for I am a man and nothing human can be alien to me, at the same time acquiescing in the obvious truth that destruction has been from of old a component of man's fate. He ought to know better than to engineer his own ruin, I freely grant. Something like this platitude is found in the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

I hold, then, that though we may be here as on a darkling plain where ignorant armies clash by night, we ought to turn our attention to the ignorance, not blame it on the cosmic weather. Ignorance can to some degree be diminished, but over the cosmic weather nobody has any control. In curing ignorance our aim should be to insure dignity to peasant and prince alike, not to diminish the stature of man. There are, I know, those who assure us that dignity is

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impossible to twentieth-century man. That quality they think was lost somewhere between *Le Contrat Social* and the concentration camp at Dachau. Seen from a good many angles, man remains the comic grasshopper Mephistopheles described; seen from other points of view, given his weakness, his rudimentary capacities, the uncertainty of his duty and the obscurity of his destiny, he has managed to produce things as various as the Parthenon, Verdi's *Otello*, the spectroscope, modern hygiene, Charlie Chaplin, the skyscraper, electronics, *The Brothers Karamazov* and the rock carvings in ancient Indian caves. Grant that no other planet, so far as we now know, has anything on it remotely resembling human life, is it not something that man has done this much? The stoic knows not surely whether the gods exist, but if they do, he believes he will know in their good time. He does know, and acquiesces in, the limitations of existence, and, acquiescing, does what he can to insure that dignity and peace shall be the goal of humanity.

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Color

MELVILLE CANE

These leaves, so deeply and so lately green,
All summer long have laid
On us their steady screen
Of shade.

A color serves to cool us in our need.

Now, beneath a blander sun,
Its mission done,
The faithful hue recedes
And abdicates the scene.

An airier season dawns and supersedes.

October's
Crisp elixir
Transmutes all heaven with irradiance
Of scarlet flame and golden fire
Before the leaves expire,
Before the final fluttering dance
In the maples, and before the oak tree dons
Its somber bronze.

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Cid Ricketts Sumner

FIRST, LET ME GO WAY DOWN YONDER by myself. Let me leave behind all pretense and high-sounding phrase and generality, together with the accumulation of other people's thought; let me withdraw from busyness, from the demands of possessions and the mechanics of living; let me strip myself of the garments of habit, escape from the pressure of dismaying event and those fears peculiar to our time; let me cast off even the comforting warmth of human relationships to stand solitary and still, way down yonder.

This is the only way that I know, and each one has to find it for himself out of his own life. All I can say is that there *is* such a way and such a place, and that it is worth going to. I have been there when I have walked alone along an empty beach to watch the breakers rolling endlessly to finger the sand and withdraw and come again; when I have stood beside a still pool in a remote canyon of the Colorado and heard the silence; when I have stretched out on dew-sweet grass and looked up into a summer sky full of stars. I have been to this lonely place when the cold white walls of pain have closed round about me, and when I have paused in the midst of living to be confronted, as I am more and more often in recent years, by the specter of my own mortality. Even now I am there as I sit under a lilac bush far from home, smelling the breath of a late Norwegian spring and seeing beyond a silver lake the upward sweep of a spruce-clad mountain that wears on its head a white mobcap and empties an apronful of snow into a dark crevasse.

What do I find in such a quiet, lonely place? I find myself, my real self, one not molded and held in shape by the circumstances and complications of my life. Here is just one small lone critter, almost but not quite lost against a background of space and silence.

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It is an incongruous figure, a comical, audacious David before the Goliath of the universe; and the sight of myself thus rather tickles my fancy. Even so small a flicker of laughter helps to preserve my identity and restore my wits and my perspective.

For there is more than self to see, to feel, to know, when I have in this fashion jumped out of my skin. "When I jump out, you jump in," the old childhood rhyme says, and it is truer than we know. There is such a You, a nonself that jumps in, swifter than a splintercat, brighter than the sun, warming, enlarging, restoring, exhilarating. I feel, I know, that there is Something greater than I, a delectable force, a power, a source of joy and light from which I receive sustenance not only sober but gay, and courage for the body's pain and the heart's grief. I remember a line—"Be still and know that I am God." It is a bit like that, yet I cannot call it by a name which has become too blurred and diminished by human interpretation and distortion. I can only call it Something.

There are other more homely and everyday times when I have found reinforcement for this whatever-it-is knowledge that comes in the lonely moment. Then I am equally humbled and exalted, electrified and cheered. This is when I have come upon simple goodness in another human being; when I have been given kindness by a stranger who asked no return; when my eyes have met a twinkling glance full of fun and understanding; when I have seen danger or disaster met with courage; when after working long over a problem there has come a swift illumination to clarify and simplify what has been just a perplexing muddle; when I have looked in wonder at live human spermatozoa in the field of a microscope. I have known it too in times of pure physical well-being, in moments of bodily delight; and I feel it when I am in the presence of one who has faith of no matter what sort. For every faith, every religion, has a mustard seed of truth in it, moving and powerful, no matter how moth-eaten and disguising may be the form and ritual in which it is wrapped. All these things I gather together in my mind and treasure. So I am sustained. It is enough for me. It is my way of holding fast to that which is good.

To others all this may seem like slim pickings indeed, too vague and generalized for comfort. To them it may seem that, asked for

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bread I have given a stone, impersonal and unresponsive—like that flat gray boulder I saw yesterday when I climbed the mountain, a boulder around which a low-growing juniper had flung all its arms, and yet still trembled in the wind. But what do we want? To be forever rocked in the bosom of Abraham? We can't have it that easy any more. We are grown up now, remember? We have eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, not enough to be wise, only enough to be barred from the Eden of superstitious belief, of faith in the old sense. We have been rudely awakened from our dream of perpetual progress. We are dissatisfied with materialism and such gadgets as often occupy and occasionally amuse us. We are distrustful of the explorations of science.

We know much about those small things, little about the great, the vital, the truly important. There are dimensions, there are worlds of which we know nothing—and I do not mean Mars or the moon. Before we go on to them let us study and learn more of the human mind, of the strange forces round about us, and of which we get only these occasional flashes, notions, feelings. I think that for the moment we have gone far enough in our exploration of the physical world. Like blind moles burrowing, we have come to the brink of destruction; and it is time to stop for a bit, to come out and work in other directions, exploring the intangible world of mind and spirit. In this field we are but small worms in the grass, astounded by a dandelion, frightened by the rustle of the wind, and all too often incredulous of anything that lies beyond our present vision, our physical reach. Of course it may be that this burrowing mole of science is not so blind as we think when we observe its arrival at the edge of our annihilation. Beyond that, and even beyond the benign vein that contributes to the well-being of humanity, it may yet reach into the heart of the mystery of time and eternity and life itself.

As for eternity, the hereafter, I do not pay it much mind. If it comes, I will take it and welcome it with interest and excitement. ("By God! she'd better," the philosopher said of another saucy woman who accepted the universe.) But I do not count upon it. This life is all I am sure of. So I feel—and more than ever as I see my own time shorten—that I must put all I have into it, wring the

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most I can from it, savor and enjoy, endure and defy it, damn and bless as the occasion arises.

If there be more for me, it will come to that lone critter way down yonder, naked and unadorned. And I am convinced that it will come only in such measure as I have been able to make some return to that large Something, a pouring back into that indefinable force through "little words of kindness, little deeds of love," as the childhood verse ran, a laying up of treasure. For there must be a kind of tit for tat, a give as well as a take, between me and that Something. Nothing else would be sensible. Whether my small surviving part will be in conscious form, my own identity preserved, or just like a drop fallen back into the ocean and merged forever with it, I do not know. "So come," I say to myself in the words of the old song, "come dip your fingers in the stew." But make a contribution, if it be but a dash of pepper or spice; a slice of onion might be an addition to that heavenly dish. It is my only hope of survival, and the more I can add, the finer the feast for others who may come late and hungry or even empty-handed. That is what I believe about the hereafter.

But now in this moment of time I can no longer ignore the existence of evil and fear, two not wholly modern arrivals, only come of late in larger and more universal guise: the evil in mushroom shape that can destroy the human race or, worse still, bring malformation to the genes and chromosomes that carry it on—surely the final blasphemy against life itself; and the fear that is the shadow of that mushroom cloud. Last but not least troubling is man's inhumanity to man.

Last week, on the boat going from Copenhagen to Oslo, I sat by chance at the table with a man and a woman, and the talk turned to these things, as it has wherever I have been either at home or abroad. The woman said, "No, no, it is all wrong, this rivalry in destructive power. We must trust in God and our fellow men, we must have faith in the good, in the decency that is in all men, we must count on their love of peace which is just like ours. We must stop being afraid. As for me, I have no fear. I have faith." The man said, "Nonsense! You play into the hands of the enemy with such talk. We are not dealing with people who have our ideas of right

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and decency and kindness. We must meet force with yet greater force at all costs. And it may be that the sooner we use it the better."

There they are, the two extremes. What could I say? Only that I hoped, hoped that if not out of love then out of our very fear we might be saved, the disease carrying its own cure and so giving us time, time in which there may come a change. Nothing in all the universe is static. After evil there is always sooner or later a revulsion from it, a turning away. To me, good and evil are like a seesaw evenly balanced with man standing in the middle and able to throw his weight now this way, now that, and so tip the scales. I can only hope that good will thus in time overbalance evil as man learns better. For we *can* learn; one has only to look back on history to see that. It is slow and hard, but I have hope, although I may have little faith and but a modicum of charity.

I see now in looking back over what I have said that, groping for words, I have fallen back on singsongs and sayings out of my childhood, that I have resorted to Scriptural phrase. Is this a small hint, a finger pointing? It may be. It may be that all truth and wisdom, could we but sift it out from the chaff, and learn to live by it, lie waiting for us in the handed-down songs and sayings of the ages and in the life of Christ. I go the long way round and return to them, though with a difference. Perhaps in some happier future time we will not be looking through a glass, darkly.

Meanwhile, this lone critter that is me sits under the lilac bush in quite illogical content, chuckling a little to myself because I am here and it is here, and because my thoughts have had the audacity to run round and round the lilac bush, poking into the mystery of it and of me and the mountain and the far blue morning sky.

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Transmutation

ELIZABETH STANTON HARDY

October turns the woodland to a muse
of amber stillness under sun.
Leaves idle down upon enraptured air,
alight in grass: painted butterflies
spinning cocoons of earth in atmosphere.

Distant hills, burnt umber immortelles
dissolve to amethyst and mauve.
Slowly from advancing mist
dusk lays a deeper spell;
the hunter's moon rides to the full.

Softly the fading color vanishes.
Strange! time always winning!
Yet the circle of the seasons holds no death;
between an end and the beginning
something alive is here . . . a living breath.

✪ ELIZABETH STANTON HARDY is the author of a recent book, *Poetry, the Shaping of Words*, on the technique of modern verse. She has also written *Leaves From This Stem*, an autobiography, and *Time in the Turning*, a book of verse. Mrs. Hardy is presently preparing a new book of poems.

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Paul B. Sears

FAITH HAS A SPECTRUM OF MEANINGS. Those in the dictionary are no more than its crude primary colors. I have heard the word pounded and expounded from many pulpits, and on rare occasions talked about with deep and sincere understanding. I have seen it gloriously manifest in the lives of simple people and in the lives of some who are far from simple. We have all seen it abused and betrayed, at times on a prodigious scale. For faith, however it be garbed, for good or for ill, is a universal attribute of human beings.

The world of experience and its projections must somehow be made to hang together, for each individual and each intimate group —not least, we may add, for Pavlov's dogs. Even the superstitions of primitive groups must be accorded a greater dignity than we allow them, for they are not so much benighted perversions of reason as the desperate effort to build into life, through whatever idiom at hand, some kind of consistency. And this goes, no less, for more sophisticated levels of belief that differ from our own.

To get at any man's faith wholly and honestly is an extremely intimate and difficult business for him or anyone else. Those of us who are concerned with faith spend our lives and creative effort in trying to clarify and express it. Credos have their use, no doubt, but they suffer from being frozen, while faith, like life which exemplifies it, is a process of struggle and growth. You don't get at a man's faith by a snapshot—you have to follow him through in action.

Take John Dewey, for example. I spent a couple of hours in his study once, and the impression I carried away was of anything but

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a prophet to whom the tables of the law had been entrusted. Rather it was that of a human being infinitely concerned with the complexities of mankind and the world as we are beginning dimly to understand it—of a man aware of the experiences, the problems and the thinking of the past, and equally aware of the present and the future. He seemed to be, above all, a compassionate and tentative person, but not in any neurotic or disparaging sense. Instead he reminded me of a wise and patient judge who was determined to get and weigh the evidence and render justice, convinced that the effort was worth his concern. To take any writings or sayings of such a man out of context and use them to build a credo seems to me to be missing the whole point of his faith—which I take to be that the search is worth the candle and must go on. And I surmise that if a man like Dewey were pressed for his motive, the answer would translate into something such as "For the sake of mankind and my own soul."

In asking for this series of papers, Hiram Haydn was not interested, I am sure, in a mere poll of the oldsters to see how many would repeat "I believe (or do not believe) in God." Nor do I think he wished to serve as impresario to a semantic wrangle. I am certain that he meant what he said when he called attention to the desperate need of the modern world for some guidance. There are powerful organizations—some of them ancient—whose profession it is to furnish such guidance. Why not let the case rest in their hands?

Many of them exhibit infinite compassion for mankind. Some dramatize their faith with superb pageantry; others express it with extreme and moving simplicity. Their ideals, if manifest in the lives of men, would surely advance human brotherhood. Yet on the record, none has fairly won and retained the universal acceptance to which it claims the right. I reject as superficial the explanation that this is due to human perversity. I prefer a better reason.

Granted that there is plenty of perversity in the world, it seems to me that the official faiths of the West, starting out with the noble premise (in theological language) that men are the sons of God, have balked at one corollary of this assertion of human dignity—

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that of the searching intellect. They began with man's soul, affording the comfort of promise to the thief on the gallows and the slave in chains. Freedom in a physical sense here and now was a much later matter of concern, and even later came—and not always with a blessing—the slow achievement of economic and political freedom. Freedom of the inquiring mind to seek and find its answers in any cranny of the universe, on any question and in any situation, and particularly in the field of faith, is still too often begrudged. In this thirst to know and understand, it seems to me, is an essential if not a final test of human freedom and dignity. (Perhaps a more ultimate test lies in realms that the official faiths have already explored and sanctioned: say, the freedom to choose self-sacrifice for greater ends. But this raises a delicate question indeed; sacrifice of self can be a masquerade for the sacrifice of others.)

At any rate, it does not seem to me enough for spiritual leaders merely to make concessions on the issue of freedom of the intellect. They must, in any hope of the ultimate unity of mankind, assert and defend it, for the mind is peculiarly man's instrument, setting him apart in degree and quality from other organisms with whom he shares the privilege of being alive.

This involves further items of faith. The first is that of the scientist—a faith that there is substantial order and consistency throughout the universe, or more precisely, that our experience of it can, through the exercise of skill, will and intellect, be organized into a consistent pattern. This is the faith that keeps the scientist going and which, thus far, has been largely justified by results.

The second is a faith in man himself, the belief that the majority of mankind will tend to make a good choice of action if given the verifiable facts that are within comprehension. This is a hard doctrine to justify, but its validity is supported on every hand by the ceaseless efforts of those who would manipulate their fellow man. They fear the truth as the Devil hates holy water, and they manipulate the sources of information wherever they can.

It should follow, then, that a further charge upon the spiritual leaders of mankind should be to keep the channels of communication between minds clear and clean. And since these channels are

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many and varied, ranging from the strict symbolism of mathematics to the warm freedom of the arts, their constant refinement and effective use is a prime obligation of the creative mind. More than this, it is the first duty of education to minimize the barriers between minds. Surely, if we believe in the dignity of man, each individual must be able, within the limits of his ability, to express himself and comprehend others without distortion, freely and honestly.

To say these things is not to reject our vast accumulation of intuitive and mystical experience or the institutions of fellowship and pastoral concern. The need is rather to cherish, scrutinize and refine this heritage. After all, is not one of the greatest reasons for confidence in man to be found in his postulation of divinity and his struggle to comprehend it? I only ask that the quest be not fettered or hooded.

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William Carlos Williams

THAT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT CONFRONT A POET are not even mainly technical becomes more and more plain to me as I grow older. It is not the fault of my readers that they frequently do not understand me, but the fault, if it can be called a fault, of the poetic process itself—a profession of which we are proud and grateful to be members in good standing. If we are!

Who are the best poets of our day? I am not going to attempt to name them. In my opinion there are not many. In any event, they are not the men or women writing in any of the modern languages who would come most readily to the public mind. There are not more than five of them, perhaps less.

Their work has been long in the ripening. Vergil's pear tree had something of that same fruit. My will to go on with my life is enmeshed in the determination to contribute all I am worth for this. When I am convinced that I have contributed something to the art of the poem, the total poem, the poem as it did not exist before I was born, I am happy in my innermost heart and continue happy for days or months at a time, or as long as I can continue in this belief.

This stimulates me, drives me with inexorable fire to go on. Without this feeling of happiness, or the possibility of it, I would not write another word. But granted this drive constantly uppermost in my mind, I cannot quit.

This is a drive which I cannot but salute. It seems eminently selfish. It is not. For among the men and women whom I salute are certain individuals who are worth more than anything I myself

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can attain, no matter how I may try. I am no more than their faulty imitator, constantly striving to emulate them—as in my infancy I always looked up to my father. But if at any time accomplishment in the living world does not equal what I have plotted out for myself, or I am injured and cannot go on, I look around for someone to whom to attach myself. I am worth nothing beside that ideal.

My life is a constant watching of the field. This is my daily business. I scan every newspaper, every journal, every letter, for hints as to what is going on in the world of events. I know, of course, that I am not omniscient or omnipotent. Something may be written in languages other than my own. There may be a genius in France or China or Finland whom I should be attending, but I cannot help that, and so I bestir myself constantly to do what I can to keep myself abreast of the times in the matters which concern me most. I cannot think of the others.

And in books in any language there are matters which cannot conceivably be lost from sight. Ultimately the gist of such writing, suppressed though it may be at any moment, will come to light. If I catch the rumor of such things, every ounce of loyalty in my bones compels me to enter the campaign to bring it to light.

Herbert Clark, a classmate of mine at medical school, exemplifies many of the traits which I admire in a man and have looked up to. It is strange how the single sight of a man in youth, without anything specific being said, can and does go along with our march through the years. It was so with Bert Clark, and affected me from first to last. Clark was not particularly my friend during the years in school nor shortly after, when he was establishing himself in the profession. I never even wrote him a letter, so far as I know. He went through the First World War. I didn't. He may or may not have had a family; but because of something I heard of him when he was a young physician, I have always felt close to him.

The thing I got to know about him was that he had been early appointed as some sort of an assistant to General Gorgas, the man who had charge of the United States' work and control, possibly the elimination, of malaria and yellow fever in the Canal Zone. From the inception of this program Clark was a dedicated man.

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And his life stuck in my crop, and he became my private man.

Little was even known about malaria and certainly nothing about the control of yellow fever when my friend was most active in research. His devotion to his task reminded me of that of an artist lost in some area of his art, an area which he cannot abandon once he has discovered it. He becomes a lover who has gazed once for the first and last time into the eyes of his beloved. When his opportunity came, Clark went into the jungle of the Canal Zone, as I knew he must. The reports of his activities in pursuit of those winged presences, the *Anopheles* mosquito and the *Aëdes aegypt*: who together have killed more men than all the wars, show that Clark was a physician who had learned the details of his craft by the sweat of his brow and brain.

When I have been at some low period of my life, not proud of myself, casting about in my mind for relief, I have had only to think of Bert Clark or another friend of my youth who also had devoted his life to the pursuit of insects—Jim Hyslop, now dead in the service of the calling into which he also had plunged as a youth. I would think of Bert Clark following the yellow fever mosquito into the Central American jungle, taking his blood specimens from the natives of the place and finally from the small beasts, monkeys and related creatures to try to discover how epidemics originated.

A man must think and read hard when he is engaged in such a pursuit. The mind must be fed to keep it alert. The arts, music and painting, or the plastic arts, are important to a man by way of relief from his main task—how the devil to discover and track down that particular demon who has been outwitting him for perhaps a lifetime. The mind can't work to the full of its bent unless he has this relief. One morning, after a relaxing sleep, he wakes, perhaps in the dark before dawn, and what has been lacking in the technique of the ingredient of a stain appears in a flash, and the details fall open to his eyes. Teamwork is often necessary, for it may be the work of some minor and brilliant technician which makes the vision come through.

These are princely dreams. Pasteur once said that a man cannot

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go on without a theory to guide him. The thing that sustains a man among his fellows is his secret opinion of himself. On the instant I look into a man's eyes I know what that man amounts to for me and know how to deal with him. I am seldom wrong. How can a man who has anything to do in the world about him afford to be often mistaken? A big dollar sign shows me at once to beware. Even the clothes a man puts on his back, his habits of speech, a snatch of conversation heard in a public conveyance or at a board meeting or country club, should be enough to alert us to what particular circle of hell he comes from.

If a man is of the royal blood, an artist—and it is the life of an artist which I have been attempting to indicate here—he will be above all this. He can't afford to be caught at it. That is why men with whom you want to be associated keep themselves mostly silent, frequent mostly the family circle and groups of intimates. They do not give themselves away; the best of them are enigmas to their fellows, covertly open in their dealings with other men. They have nothing to sell. They are like Mr. Chief Justice Holmes, who left what small fortune he had to the United States Government when he died.

The thing that keeps me interested in life after having driven through to whatever success I have been able to attain among my fellow men is, obviously enough, the women. Women still have something to sell me. Take a young woman I saw only yesterday at a reading. What eyes! Not that they were so beautiful in a magazine-cover sense—there was something else, something any man would be proud to have evoked in a woman's eyes were he on the brink of the grave. You can't buy that.

Women are more sensitive to what Ezra Pound once called "the purring of the invisible antennae." There are, of course, whores—poor girls, if they don't want to rob you or stick you with a knife. But these are not the creatures I'm talking about. Even when women are old, and sometimes very old, they still retain, if they are aware, something I still find worth my while digging for. When I am asked why I find life worth living, it is the look in the

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woman's eyes that I saw yesterday which rescues me with an answer.

I'm not vain—it's long past the time for that. Maybe it's a memory, but I don't think so. Love was never as sweet as that. I'm not sorry for myself, for I think I can lie down in my bed and die as uncomplaining as any man, as my father did under similar circumstances. I am proud of him. What is it then? I'm not inordinately stupid. I have had one stroke and may well have another at any time. But life still interests me, and not because of any masculine competition. Let my sex take care of themselves. But the gentleness and tenderness and insight and loyalty of women and what they see, I am sure, in most masculine looks which should disgust them, keep me plugging.

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Chagall's Ebony Horse

JON SWAN

Living without wings was easy and the flesh said yes
To staying in the rooms it ran for a little while,
And exercised itself in seldom tears and often smile
That was good for the skin and also for business;

And almost was at home in its sweet prison,
Settled in its chains to function till it died,
When it, through eyes that it denied
Any vaster area than 20/20 vision,

Saw, how easily, her slow retreating
Down the sullen street; and distance that bereft him
Of his conquered eyes, lonely left him
With a wider gazing in his mind, and rougher beating

Down the veins, until, you may remember, all the flesh,
Even his angry brain, said uncle to her loveliness
And knew at last no moon or mounting Venus
In the visioned East could hold their wish

That rose with her beside him on the soaring horse,
The sea beneath them, servant to the moon
That hung upon the mane of their strange roan,
Until all living with such wings was easy and the flesh said yes.

✪ JON SWAN is a researcher on the editorial staff of the *New Yorker*. His poems have appeared in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, the *New Yorker* and the *London Magazine*.

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Melville Cane

HAD THE INVITATION TO TAKE PART in this symposium arrived in the mail, acceptance might have hung in the balance; reflection might have counseled rejection as the better part of wisdom. But an editor's beguiling bid over the telephone is quite a different matter; one's guard is down and one's ego takes over. So in practically the same sentence, I stated that I had never organized my beliefs or formulated a supporting course of conduct; that, therefore, I felt quite disqualified for the task; and that—not therefore, but nevertheless—I'd be glad to make a try at it.

My decision has relevance since it represents a changing attitude toward new adventures. Ten years or so ago, either from inertia or some other negating demon, I should certainly have shied away promptly. Now, as time grows shorter and one's machinery tends to become rusty and slow down, one is challenged with the prospect of progressive deterioration and decline.

How to meet this challenge is the problem which confronts each of us regardless of his years, but more urgently the aging. What resources, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, can we summon in order to invest the tenuous future with vitality, value and felicity? In short, how can we make of life a continuous surge of renewal and fruition? To this momentous question each of us will give his answers according to his lights.

That I might indeed own a philosophy of life, in the august connotations of the phrase, had never occurred to me until recently. Even now I doubt that what goes for a philosophy is much more than a serviceable formula for survival. I have never deliberately reduced my thoughts to a system or creed; that seems too self-con-

✪ MELVILLE CANE, lawyer and author, has contributed articles, fiction and poetry to leading magazines. The poems quoted in this article are from *And Pastures New*, a collection of his poetry published in 1956 by Harcourt Brace and Company.

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scious a performance and too presumptuous. My training as a lawyer in logical exposition has never extended to methodical speculation concerning the universe or my role in it. That's not saying that I don't speculate; I have, and I do.

Intimations from the outside have now prodded me toward self-examination. Critics have noted a "philosophical" strain in my poems—they've used that awesome word—and a review of my latest volume in the New York *Times* appeared under the startling head, "A Lyric Philosopher."

Here I need point out that consciously I rarely write so-called philosophical poetry. My poems for the most part derive not so much from a set theme or subject as from intuitions, sensations, feelings momentarily captured. These I develop to no other end than that the product shall be as perfect aesthetically as an imperfect artist can make them. If the product should give off a philosophic overtone, it derives from the artifact and not from any initial intent. The overtone is a by-product.

Now, re-examining my work, I must admit that the critics may have a point. Without having been aware of it before, I now discover many cherished convictions in my verse.

A way of life, to adopt a less heavy phrase, is not something one receives ready-made to be copied, or something one frames and hangs on the office wall, like Kipling's "If." A way of life is an organism whose origin goes back to infancy and whose growth stops only at the grave. Its contour and content issue, among other things, from background, temperament, and the variety and unpredictability of our experiences. Our unique personal characteristics, whether inherited or early acquired, form doubtless a major initial influence.

In my own case, my guess would be that I am probably cheerful by nature, and that no matter how clouded the horizon for the time being, cheerfulness remains the prevailing color of my outlook. It follows that cheerfulness by its very warmth breeds optimism; it likewise carries within itself the strain of humor, and humor in its deepest sense and significance is but another name for perspective. To see life both steadily and whole, in Arnold's pregnant phrase, is both the beginning and the end of wisdom.

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Cheerfulness, to repeat, breeds optimism, and optimism is born of faith. Faith for me is the unreasoned conviction that however incomprehensible the source of creation may be, meaning lies at the heart of the mystery. And whatever may be the secret of divinity, I hold that the universe was conceived and fashioned not haphazardly, but with plan, system and purpose, and that we, here on earth, have been appointed to be the instruments and agents of the plan.

So circumstanced, each one of us is charged with a heavy responsibility. I maintain that within every human soul there resides the essence and the presence of divinity, and that our main if not sole excuse for being rests on our assuming the obligation to be faithful to our destiny.

I further believe that each of us is endowed at birth not only with the capacity for good but also with the counterforce of evil. Evil I define loosely and not in doctrinal or theological terms as anything tending to seduce us from our ordained course or to impair or destroy our will and our search toward self-realization.

Evil assumes Protean dissemblances and disguises, too many indeed for enumeration. I shall set down a few examples out of my own experience, though not necessarily in the order of their importance. Some have crept into my poems.

Evil, however, need not be evil inexorably. With one emotionally caught in its coils it loses its hold when the victim confronts it objectively. Objectivity frees one from frustrating involvement and thereby restores to the person his saving detachment.

One habitual pattern of evil, to illustrate, appears in the masochistic aspect of "the backward glance," by which is meant self-flagellation over past failures, whether of lost opportunities or of nonsuccess in performance. Here again cool detachment is needed to free the psyche from a sterile and harmful condition. I stress the danger in these few lines:

> Beware the vain lament,
> The hunger for what's spent.
> This is dead-sea fruit
> And ashes to the taste.
> Quash it with your foot.
> What is past is past.

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Evil thrives on loss of self-control, whether in anger, grief or other emotional disturbance. Evil delights in blind suffering. Suffering is without value unless one is able to ask in the aftermath of reflection: "Why have I suffered?" Then and not till then can one profit from the experience. To approach the problem in quite another way, paradoxically, one can overpower suffering through surrendering to it. I've attempted to express this in the following short poem:

GIVE WAY TO GRIEF

Give way to grief,
And, unashamed,
Abandon stoic fortitude a while.
Set free, a while, the soul,
Better to bear its load.

Tears unshed are stones upon the heart
That choke the healing stream.

Unlock the flood-gates;
Loose the waters.
Give way, and cope with grief.

And evil in perhaps its most seductive and corruptive guise assails us where we may be especially vulnerable, in our relation to the world outside and to our fellow men. A poem, "The Plausible," begins with these lines:

The devil
With malign
Design
Is out to scale mankind to a common level.

Conformity, clearly, is the relentless archenemy of the individual. How to outwit its strategems and elude its toils will call for the most untiring vigilance, the keenest awareness. For

Beneath the alluring guise of reason
(Man's weakness for the plausible
The comfortable solution)
It spreads its poison.

But even more strongly than on reason does conformity press its specious appeal on conscience. Our business is to be alert against

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any false reading of our obligations, in the name of duty, to collective expedience; against any surrender of personality, our qualitative singularity, to quantitative commonality.

For our mores are grounded in the general need for co-operative security. To what exent are they based on principle, to what extent merely convenient and changeable rules for communal living? And to what extent should we, need we, subscribe and give assent? How far shall duty govern, how far self-interest and self-preservation? We must recognize, for our own protection, that the mores derive from compromise, from mutual accommodation to general needs, that they represent adjustment to an undefined impersonal average. Devoid of absolute standards of character and behavior, they fail to apprehend the highest reach or to take into account man's ideal quest for perfectibility.

Man's concern, therefore, is to defend his identity, to preserve his own unique image. He must resist the pressure of convention which demands that he put on a collective mask. As citizens in a democracy, alike prizing its blessings and gratefully sharing its burdens, we must never forget its essential meaning. Democracy is not a mere abstraction but an instrument for liberating and insuring the spiritual endowment, indeed, the birthright, of every individual.

Freedom to doubt, to dissent, to be different and stand separate from the mass, is not only a sacred right but an opportunity and responsibility for advancing the common lot. The strength of a civilization is to be measured by the qualities of those who compose it.

I see that though I may not have strayed too far from the subject, I have yet to specify my techniques for facing the future. One needs, though one hesitates, to be autobiographical.

But first a few words on "old age." I reject the phrase with its suggestion that it represents a limited compartment of time requiring special and desperate treatment. In that phrase I find menace, apprehension, consciousness of the Grim Reaper's shadow over one's shoulder. This symbol of the Reaper, which I attach to the phrase, grimly bent on cutting me down, is far too unsettling for peace of mind and a constructive life. I am likewise annoyed when

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in answer to a question about his health a contemporary may say, with a touch of depreciation, "Pretty good for an old man," when he really has nothing to complain of.

Our later years, assuming that one has developed a healthy attitude toward life, carry on a natural, unbroken continuity with what has gone before. We should approach them not in crisis but with the serenity that accompanies the passing of the seasons.

Neither am I happy with the equivocal term *retirement*; it is too heavily weighted with a sense of withdrawal. Withdrawal from what? To what? For what? Retirement can mean retreat or surrender. It *should* mean escape from impedimenta to the vantage ground of fulfillment.

I have arrived at a few conclusions on what to avoid and what to welcome, usable tools for progress. Here is the list, platitudes and all:

The need to overcome negative attitudes and negative emotions. For example, a closed mind, any waste or leakage of energy.

Not to anticipate disaster or failure, but to make each day sufficient unto itself. Again, the conservation of psychic energy.

To learn from suffering and thereby to transcend it.

To thrive on the emotional friction created by difficulty and disappointment.

To keep in sound physical condition through proper exercise—walking, golfing, gardening—and through sensible, and therefore enjoyable, choice of food, drink and tobacco.

To meet one's fellow beings as equals, neither with sufferance nor with condescension.

To establish a rhythm and tempo of detachment, which inherently creates a sense of perspective and the larger view.

To keep open the pores of the mind, and to keep flexible and resilient the antennae of intuition, sensation and feeling.

Not to fancy that an accumulation of years will qualify one as a Nestor. Regrettably, one may even be a tiresome Polonius. Similarly, to be sure not to cultivate the stoop of self-importance.

To approach each fresh problem with an honest skepticism and the wish to arrive at truth.

To summon fresh energies from untapped sources.

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And constantly, and most importantly, to give more of oneself to the self.

I cap what I have been saying with a quotation from Lord David Cecil's essay on Joseph Conrad which cautions never "to allow oneself to be cowed by the danger and disaster of existence into surrendering that faith in the value of individual nobility which is implanted in the human soul at birth."

Finally, what I most deeply believe may be found in the following poem, which appeared in this magazine twenty-two years ago, and which probably says as much in its brevity as has been gropingly spread over these pages.

THE TASK

How to cope
With the flight of hope;

Under despair
How to endure
(Endure! Endure!)

And be more than a leaf
On the gale of grief,

And perceive, as only a fraction,
The pain and distraction.

How, in the perilous instant,
To hold, how dimly, the constant;

How dimly,
The way, the meaning, the mystery.

How, in the clutch of extinction,
Still to function, human!

This is the task, the prayer,—that I may save
The suffering god within, that he may live,
And greatly live, beyond the grave.

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

What, I have sometimes wondered, is the most important question a man can ask? Is it, perhaps, "Does God exist?" or only, as some maintain, "What kind of society provides for the most efficient and equitable system of production and distribution?"

Each of these questions is the archetype of a whole set, every one of which involves the same issue. If, for instance, you ask whether or not there are any moral absolutes which man disregards at his peril, you are asking at least part of what the question "Does God exist?" implies. If you ask instead, "What sort of education should the citizen be given to assure him a proper adjustment to the world in which he lives?" you are choosing a member of the family to which the other belongs. Which question you consider fundamental depends upon which of two premises you choose. Either man has his being in a universe he did not make and which, therefore, he cannot fundamentally change, or the universe in which he lives is, both physically and morally, whatever he makes it.

Like many of my contemporaries I don't like to bring in God. For one thing, the term has been defined in too many ways to be surely meaningful. For another, even a precise definition would commit us to dealing with a question too large and remote for a rational answer in terms of our experience. There have been times when it could be asked and such times may come again. But I, at least, must settle for a question far less inclusive: "Is there any such thing as human nature?" Are there beliefs, enterprises and ways of life consonant with that nature, and others which are not and never could be made consonant with it? Or can human nature adapt and adjust to anything? Should we ask not merely "Which society provides for the most efficient and equitable system of production and distribution?" but also "What society is most in accord with human nature?" Similarly, should we ask not merely "What education best fits a man for living in his world?" but also "What kind of education and what kind of world would best accord with his nature?"

Such questions, I realize, have been increasingly unpopular since Hobbes expounded the theory of what Locke was to call the *tabula rasa.* Start with that theory, and all the relativisms—social, cultural, moral and aesthetic—logically follow. On a blank slate anything can be written. Man is whatever society makes him. Vice is not a creature of hideous mien unless you have been brought up to call some particular thing vice and to call it hideous. There is no use asking whether or not a custom or a society or a procedure is in accord with human nature. The sensible thing to do is to adjust the human being to whatever his society has evolved.

Do we have to accept this conclusion? The eighteenth century faced it before us and put up a fight against Hobbism. If, it said, the good is not what is in accordance with God's will, it is at least what is in accord with nature. And there is, the eighteenth century was convinced, something to be so called. Moreover, nature's law was assumed to be discoverable—in morals and in aesthetics as well as in jurisprudence. Whatever all men had agreed upon was according to nature, and thus nature (including human nature) set up its own absolutes.

But the fight against relativism which the eighteenth century put up turned out to be only a delaying action. Presently nature was criticized out of existence just as God had

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been. There isn't, said the critics, anything in religion or morals or art upon which all men actually have agreed. The more you learn of history and the more you study cultures other than your own, the more obvious it becomes that men can believe, do and want the most irreconcilable things. What any people calls—as all peoples do—the law of God or the law of nature is merely the custom of its community. And there, up to the present day, the matter has rested.

Of course, few of us—perhaps none—consistently follow such convictions to their logical conclusion. I have heard the most uncompromising relativists denounce the crimes of the Nazis when they ought to have said simply: "Their culture is not the same as ours." I have even heard relativists proclaim with quaint inconsistency that we oughtn't talk any longer about what people "ought" to do. Even the Russian Communists urged the workers to unite when it should have been obvious that, according to their own theory, only the dialectic of matter could determine whether the workers would or would not unite. Nevertheless, ours is a world in which, increasingly, law, public opinion, education and the social services have been based upon the assumption that men are whatever their society makes them and that we should always ask not what it is in their nature to be, but how they may be adapted and adjusted to prevailing conditions and tendencies.

Because all of this implies a definite answer to what is to me the grandest of all questions, I naturally wonder whether the common answer is justifiable and permanent, or whether we shall someday swing again in a different direction and discover evidence now neglected that human nature really is something in itself and that it does provide certain absolutes, valid at least in the human realm. Have the anthropologists been so preoccupied with the collection of materials to demonstrate the enormous *differences* between cultures that they have overlooked some things which are common to them all? Have the experimental psychologists been so busy conditioning both animals and men that they have paid little attention to the resistance to conditioning which both can put up?

One little straw blowing in the winds of psychological doctrine is worth noting. One school has begun to wonder whether instinct on the one hand and the conditioned reflex on the other really can account for all the behavior of living organisms. Of course, a brain which carries written upon it only a system of instincts is far from actually being a blank slate. But that is by no means all. Some members of a new school have happened to remember: (1) that birds know by instinct how to fly and do not have to be taught; (2) that though seals do not know instinctively how to swim, they are very easily taught to do so; and (3) that you would have a very hard time indeed teaching most songbirds to swim. In general then, there are not just two classes of animal behavior (inborn and learned) but also a third—that which is not inborn even though the ability to learn it easily is.

So astounded were some when their attention was called to this obvious fact that they began to wonder if the same might be true not only of skills, but throughout the whole psychic realm of beliefs, tastes and motives. The old thesis of the moral relativists was that since no one was born with the "innate idea" that dishonesty and treachery are evil, the conviction that they are is only the result of social education. The opposite could just as easily be taught; value judgments, so they said, are merely the rationalized prejudices of a given culture.

But, ask the new psychologists, isn't it possible that some moral ideas are more easily learned than others; that what the eighteenth century called natural law, natural taste and the rest is real, and that it consists of those beliefs and tastes which are most readily learned and most productive of health and happiness? Perhaps you can condition an individual or a society to think and behave "unnaturally," just as you might possibly teach a robin to swim. But men who have been conditioned to think or behave unnaturally are as unhappy and as in-

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efficient as swimming robins. As the biologist Roger J. Williams puts it, "There are blanks and blanks. The blank brain of the child is capable as time goes on of accepting, digesting (perceiving), and acting upon a multitude of impressions that the brain of a rat is quite incapable of handling." What is true of a rat is not necessarily true of a man.

Is this belaboring the obvious? Not anything so obvious that the implications have been inescapable for those who preferred to ignore them. What difference does it make whether or not certain ideas are "innate" if the capacity to entertain those ideas and not others is? In that case the blank slate goes out of the window and every unqualified relativism along with it.

We are back, it seems to me, to the eighteenth century and one of the most discredited exponents of eighteenth-century ideas. Pope put it thus: "Nature affords at least a glimm'ring light;/The lines, tho' touch'd but faintly, are drawn right." What Pope thought of as a metaphor may turn out to be biologically accurate. On the not quite blank slate the lines are touched too faintly to constitute an automatic instinct. They are much like the latent image on a photographic plate. They are imperceptible until developed. But what development will reveal must already exist. There is, then, such a thing as human nature. What we are born with is not a blank slate but a film already bearing a latent image.

No doubt—as Pope went on to say elsewhere, as experimental psychologists prove in the laboratory, and as educators as well as dictators have too often demonstrated—the lines may be "o'er laid" and the unnatural cease to seem a creature of hideous mien. But the conditioners have to work at it—hard. Men believe in, for instance, the reality of good and evil much more readily than they can be made to accept cultural relativism.

Such an assumption is, at least, one which no valid science forbids us to make, and if we make it we are saved from the nihilism of present-day cultural and moral relativism as the eighteenth century was saved from the nihilism of Hobbes. In a sense, God—or at least a useful substitute for Him—exists. We have again some point of reference now lacking in every inquiry which sets out to determine what kind of society or education or culture would be best for us. One thing is no longer as good as another provided only it can be shown, or made, to exist. We can stop talking exclusively about what can be done to men or what we can make them into, and talk again about what, in themselves, they are.

This will involve what is certainly no easy inquiry. One of the most terrifying of Pascal's *pensées* seems to range him with the enemy: "They say that habit is second nature; perhaps nature is only first habit." To distinguish correctly between the one and the other is one of the most difficult tasks we could set ourselves. The eighteenth-century doctrine of nature collapsed largely because that century was too ready to assume that any cherished prejudice or habit was really "in accord with nature"—a tendency which reached a nadir when, for example, Boswell convinced himself that verse without rime was "unnatural" because when he read Milton to a rustic he got the comment that the fellow "would be riming" but couldn't quite make it.

If "the natural" really does exist, it is certainly something definable only in terms of the largest generalities. It won't settle disputes between Big-endians and Little-endians. Monogamy, for instance, is probably not "natural" and polygamy "unnatural." But perhaps the conviction that some code, rather than none, should govern the relations between men and women is "natural." Human nature and the societies in which it can function reasonably well are enormously variable. But perhaps they are not limitlessly so. Those anthropologists and those historians of morals who have gathered so much material to prove that the variety is limitless overlook the fact that their evidence actually suggests the contrary. They may demonstrate that a specific action which is considered just at one time and place was considered unjust at others. But how many flourishing cultures

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can they exhibit in which the concept of justice did not exist? How many societies other than ours ever believed that "morals" were never anything but "mores"? Does not the evidence of the anthropologists themselves seem to suggest that this is a genuinely "unnatural" idea?

Albert Einstein, so I once read, told students at the California Institute of Technology that he doubted whether most present-day Americans were any happier than the Indians who inhabited the continent before the white man came. Nine men out of ten would, I suppose, reject so extreme a statement. But a considerable majority would probably agree that we are at least *not as much happier* as the increase in wealth, security, comfort and power would suggest that we ought to be. Neither our society, our civilization, nor our technology has paid off as we believed it would. And we neither know why nor what we can do about it. We can only go on seeking more wealth, more security, more comfort and more power.

Is it possible that we can do nothing else just because we have never inquired what it is in our nature to want most and to be happiest with? Is it possible that we really want something else also; that it is not in accord with our nature to assume that a high standard of living is the *summum bonum*, and that upon it, and upon it only, our hearts should be set? Is it possible that man is not by nature a creature whose happiness is directly proportioned to the wealth he commands and the speed at which he can travel? We go on the assumption that he can at least be turned into such a creature provided we tell him often enough that this is what he is, and provided we give him wealth and speed in ever-increasing measure. But wouldn't it be worth while to ask whether or not there is something else he wants—either instead of or also—and to see if it can be provided?

There are other such questions I would like to ask. When, for instance, I see unhappy children raised according to the theory that their nature demands "uncritical love," and when I hear that juvenile delinquency is increasing under laws which insist that no young person is responsible for his acts, I wonder whether or not both the spoiled child and the juvenile delinquent are dismayed rather than reassured by the world in which they find themselves —dismayed if only because the belief that acts have consequences and that human beings should be treated "as they deserve" is part of that concept of justice which was "lightly touched" in outline upon the not quite blank slate with which they were born.

But these are very large questions. And —as an old teacher almost inevitably puts it—the bell has rung.

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reappraisals

Ernest Hemingway: Joy Through Strength

OTTO FRIEDRICH

"There live not three good men unhanged in England, and one of them is fat and grows old," complained Sir John Falstaff as he brooded over a cup of sack. "God help the while! a bad world, I say. . . . A plague of all cowards, I say still." The words and the tone are familiar to contemporary letters, for Ernest Hemingway's reports of his boxing matches with "Mr. Stendhal" and "Mr. Turgenev" were anticipated by Falstaff's account of his triumph over "two rogues in buckram suits," and then four, seven, nine, eleven of them, critics, rivals, all slain by the knight's legendary valor. Falstaff was a complete failure, perhaps because he had a sense of humor, but a humorless Falstaff could work at becoming famous. And how Hemingway has worked. Malcolm Cowley, in "A Portrait of Mister Papa," lovingly reported Hemingway at work from four to six hours every morning, counting the words he had written at the end, "485 words on Monday, 516 on Tuesday. . . ." Gertrude Stein, in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, was less sympathetic when she quoted Hemingway as saying that his main interest was "the career, the career."

Out of this almost unceasing work for more than thirty years, there have emerged five novels, a burlesque, an excellent short novel, two books about killing animals, a lot of magazine articles, and one plump volume of short stories that contains Hemingway's half-dozen minor masterpieces. It is not an exceptionally impressive body of work either in quantity or in quality, and yet Hemingway's success has been enormous. His royalties enable him to live in style, and his career reached a commercial climax with the receipt of $125,000 for the movie rights of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," a short story about a writer who prostituted himself. Such admirers as Arthur Koestler proclaim Hemingway "the greatest living writer," and even as hostile a critic as Edmund Wilson hails his "marvelous prose." If influence were an important criterion, there could be no question of Hemingway being "the champion," as he has been quoted in praise of himself. The myth of toughness has been re-enacted in scores of war novels, I-the-wanderer novels, detective novels and even Greenwich Village novels. The influence extends downward through movies and newspaper columns, downward to the world of television serials and comic strips, "Dragnet" and "Dick Tracy." At the lowest levels, with all of Hemingway's good qualities distilled out, we find the claylike precipitate of the Hemingway hero, the Hemingway manner, the Hemingway values, the use of facile cynicism as a mask for facile self-pity, the use of tight-lipped banality to disguise loose-lipped sentimentality, the great Hemingway types of the tough guy with the suffering soul and the slut with the heart of gold. The influence is all the more powerful because of the depths it reaches, re-emerging, like a long-drowned cat, in forms greatly different from what the original creator intended. Yet that is part of the mystery of Hemingway, a potentially great writer who has persistently limited and corrupted himself.

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✪ OTTO FRIEDRICH, a New York newspaperman, is the author of *The Poor in Spirit* and has recently finished another novel entitled *Split Levels*. This essay on Ernest Hemingway is a condensation of a chapter from a book in process, *The Dark Tradition*, which considers pessimism and the concept of evil in American literature.

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reappraisals

William Faulkner: The Faulkner Fable

WALTER FULLER TAYLOR

During the past decade—that is, during the recent remarkable upswing in the criticism of William Faulkner—it has become customary to speak of Faulkner as a moralist. He is not, of course, thought of as a moral teacher, but as a creator of novels which in their myth-resembling effect illumine the moral nature of man. The specialists in Faulkner criticism have generally encouraged this view; and though they have not sketched any precise outline of Faulkner's moralism, they have tended to associate it with the ethics of Christianity. Faulkner expresses, according to Leslie Fiedler, the "sentimental, Protestant ethos" of his region; he works, according to Randall Stewart, in "the orthodox Christian tradition, a tradition which posits original sin."

For such opinions, and for a certain bland assumption that he is on the side of the angels, Faulkner's own pronouncements are partly responsible. In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech he set forth, before a world-wide audience, the idealistic view that it is the writer's privilege "to help man endure by lifting his heart"; and he has used repeatedly, as if they made up an incantation, such words as *courage, honor, hope, pride, compassion, pity* and *sacrifice.* Since 1950 he has handed down a number of *obiter dicta* on public affairs; and while these were at times oversimple and mutually inconsistent, collectively they gave off a fine glow of moral idealism. Above all, his most ambitious recent narrative, *A Fable,* the story of a military mutiny-by-passive-resistance, insists on an awareness of man's capacities for good and evil. For not only does *A Fable* come to grips with one of the great collective evils of the century, the First World War; it intentionally parallels the most ethically informed and dynamic narrative in our Western civilization: the New Testament story of the week of Christ's Passion and Resurrection. Because of its own qualities, and also because of the long retrospective light it casts on his earlier writings, *A Fable* is essential to the understanding of Faulkner. Critics, as Dayton Kohler quite rightly insists, must eventually come to terms with it.

But this understanding must come eventually rather than immediately, for the imagined world of *A Fable* is too vast and too intricate for immediate possession. The novel is immensely rich in powerfully realized incidents, from the pantomime of a Negro chauffeur's razor-murder of a woman to the astonishingly tall tale of the theft of a three-legged race horse. It is equally rich in perceptions ranging from that of the Tennessee mountains' "lean and tilted corn" to those of the dithyramb on the woman-city, Paris, "Eve and Lilith both" to every man so fortunate as to know her. Nor is it any less rich in people, in their infinite variousness from the colored Reverend Tobe Sutterfield, the quintessence of Christ-like meekness, to the Generalissimo, the quintessence of secular wisdom and power. No immediate, single effort of criticism will accurately chart the myriad directions of this labyrinth.

Let us attempt then, for the present, only the task of focusing on the labyrinth's main vista and direction a single clear and steady light. That main direction has been sug-

(Continued on next page)

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gested both by the Faulkner specialists and by Faulkner himself: by the critics, in their insistence that Faulkner's is a *moral* view of the human condition; and by Faulkner, in the insistence of his Reverend Tobe Sutterfield that we must believe in man—the total man, the evil as well as the good. What then *is* man as he appears in the pages of *A Fable*? The answer to this question will help throw light on Faulkner's view of the human condition, on the significance of *A Fable* considered as art, and on certain curious limitations in recent Faulkner criticism.

Faulkner's answer to the Psalmist's "What is man?" is given in some part in the individuals imaginatively created in *A Fable* —in the stylistic suggestions and overtones in which they are reported, in their deeds and words and gestures, and above all in the human experiences that are stressed and *preponderantly* dwelt upon. Man—if we may generalize him from instances of Faulkner's inventiveness—is a being fulfilled in his pleasanter moments by a blend of successful finance and happy fornication, as is the owner of the villa occupied by General Gragnon. Less happily, man is a being who, thwarted in some obsession (as is the young British glory-seeker Levine) finds life worthless and barely manages to get through a single day's boredom. Morally callous, he can use wealth got from the slave trade to have his name "illuminated in colored glass above his Beacon Hill pew," or with matter-of-fact treachery offer his "friend" the command of an attack foredoomed to failure.

He—man—is a being physically repulsive. Apparently unable to accept casually the functioning of the human body, Faulkner turns on its foulness a perception the intenser because of his own incredulous outrage. The British Runner of his novel cannot merely awaken after being knocked out; Spillane-fashion, he must awaken spitting out teeth and "groaning and choking on his own blood." Morally, Faulkner's man is likely to be no less foul; his callously expended Foreign Legionnaire has been "reduced to rooting about among the hog-wallows and cesspools of the human race itself." Or when, by some rare fall of chance, someone does arrive at manhood innocent and tender-minded, he is presented as an object of contempt. The Yankee youth whose presence hinders the Jew Buchwald and the Negro Beauchamp in their murder of both Gragnon and Gragnon's professional integrity becomes merely, in the words of Beauchamp, "that Ioway bastard."

Man is also (at least in *A Fable*) a being so rule-obsessed that in the person of a German general he kills the pilot who, at his own command, has landed him on enemy soil, so callous that in no man's land he will kill a helpless German officer in order to steal more easily the officer's wrist watch. Man, typical man, is as repulsive as the British groom who goes about his American tour stealing and crapshooting, who throws his winnings away on "whores and whiskey," and who impresses the not-too-fastidious Tennessee mountaineers as "morose, savage, foul-mouthed, almost inarticulate; . . . misshapen, savage, and foul." He can be as mentally vacant as the Corporal's wife, the former Marseilles whore, who in trying to talk can only spit through her lips her half-chewed bread, who after the Corporal's death leaves his family and returns to her former vocation, and whose whoring is justified (or so we are archly informed) because she has an aged grandmother to support.

Such lurid cases of human foulness and unawareness do not add up to quite the total picture of mankind as it is developed in *A Fable;* there are such exceptions as the Corporal, the Runner and the Reverend Tobe Sutterfield. On the other hand, an overwhelming preponderance of moral obliquity appears not only in Faulkner's individuals but also in his concept of collective man and in his rehandling of the New Testament story. Collective man in *A Fable* varies only from groups that are merely obsessed and automatic to groups for whom physical and moral filth is the permanent human condition. Faulkner's kindliest view of collective man is no doubt his account of the mid-American mob protecting the horse thieves from the law. Yet the protectors, for

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all their instinctive rightness of feeling, act less like human beings than like zombies. Following Faulkner's New Orleans lawyer, the five men heading the mob move "docile and simultaneous as five sheep . . . across the room . . . like five of the identical targets—ducks or clay pigeons or stars—traversing on their endless chain the lilliputian range of a shooting-gallery." The logic of Faulkner's imagery is, of course, that men are merely automatons; the logic of other passages in *A Fable* is that men are really subhuman and repulsively bestial; and these dramatizations of the subhuman recur so often as to compose a kind of foundation-view of human nature.

The generals assembled to discuss the troop mutiny, for instance, appear in Faulkner's imagining not as human beings but as "a pack of tameless forest beasts." In the night at Chaulnesmont, the members of the mob who would manhandle Marthe, Marya and the Corporal's wife range themselves like hounds "baying the three strangers in a little ring of space," though presently the mob grows human enough to pelt them with dung. Another mob—that which chokes the streets of Chaulnesmont all day—suggests in its blind movements the automatic flood and ebb of a river system; its yelling, at the sight of the leaders of the mutiny, is as mindless as the screeching of hyenas or the yelping of jackals. Collectively its members make up only a "herd of Western cattle" or a "blind headless earth-brute." They do not think, only react. They have "no plan; only motion, like a wave." Crushed into the Place de Ville they are only "one aspic of gaped faces." Yet even the mob in Chaulnesmont has not sunk so far below the human level as the mutinied regiment, which in its compound begins to make at twilight the sound "not human at all but animal, not yelling but howling, huddling still in the dusk that fading and shapeless mass which might have been Protoplasm itself, eyeless and tongueless on the floor of the first dividing of the sea."

In shrinking man to the dimensions of less complicated life forms, Faulkner is hardly writing "in the Christian tradition." He is only performing anew one of the oldest tricks of the naturalistic novelist; and, indeed, much in his view of man is at one with the naturalism of Theodore Dreiser in *The Titan* or of Frank Norris in *Vandover and the Brute.* In many of the folk of *A Fable,* as in many of those in the naturalistic novel, awareness is so low as to preclude any but the most sporadic practice of the humanistic or Christian virtues, or even the virtues of *l'homme moyen sensuel.* Occasionally, to be sure, the smothering pall with which Faulkner blankets human nature is lifted, as in the portrayal of the gracefully imbecilic Marya, or in her sister Marthe's observation that "people really are kind," or in the natural rightness of the feeling of the mid-American crowds toward the horse thieves. But it is not these rare shafts of sunlight that, in *A Fable,* endure and prevail. It is the encircling gloom of such scenes as that in which the Allied and German forces, seeking in no man's land the brotherliness of fraternization, are destroyed by an artillery barrage.

As the *Fable* nears its climax, the gloom even darkens, the sense of the unspeakable foulness of the human condition intensifies. The soldiers compelled to work amid the intolerable stench of the abattoirs of Verdun can live only the dazed unconscious lives of sleepwalkers. The squad sent there for the body of the Unknown Soldier have sunk into such moral obliquity as to make Swift's Yahoos look, in comparison, like well-scrubbed middle-class citizens. It is they who at last, in a grotesque travesty of the Biblical maxim to take no thought for the morrow, fill and empty the Unknown Soldier's coffin as they may, quite contented if they have in their possession "a body, and drink to take care of the night."

Sometimes the evil which emanates from the pages of *A Fable* is "evil" in the traditional, theological sense, the evil of "pride and worse ambition." More often, evil in *A Fable* is a blend of filth and unawareness, and upon this kind of evil the novel is focused with an obsessive concentration. The Corporal, the Runner and others do, at times, contend with a quiet nobility against an untoward fate. But the overwhelming concern of *A Fable* is not with

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these protagonists; it is with that which overthrows them. The New Testament, had it been proportioned as is *A Fable*, would, for every page devoted to Christ, devote fifty to Herod and Pilate and the Sanhedrin. Nor is this concentration on evil redeemed, in *A Fable*, by any compensating beauty of style. Faulkner cannot crush from his nightshade the malignant beauty of Shakespeare's

> Nay, but to live
> In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
> Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love
> Over the nasty sty—

His nearest approach to any such *fleurs du mal* is the poetic glimmer which flickers over his observations on old age, when "the anticipation of the latrine is more moving than even the spread of a girl's hair on the pillow." But even this dubious sort of beauty is not typical of *A Fable*. The repellant and the nauseous in Faulkner's view of man are not dominated, are not transmuted, by the imagination. *They* dominate the imagination. They are ends, not means. They furnish the controlling drive and the dominant tone in Faulkner's portrayal of man, the being in whom he would have us believe.

For the peculiar malignancy in Faulkner's blast at mankind there are, no doubt, explanations, and some of the more fruitful of these may well lie in the kinship between the *Fable* and the writings of the Existentialists. Yet however accounted for, the malignancy will still be there; it may be explained, but not explained away; and, after all, the literary parallel which Faulkner himself insists on is not with the Existentialists but with the authors of the New Testament. Long interested in myth, he has dealt in *A Fable* with what is, to him, the supreme myth, the story of Christ, and especially of the week of Christ's Passion and Resurrection. But he has not, of course, merely reproduced that story. He has changed it, and the uniform tone and nature of his changes should remove any lingering doubt concerning his view of the human condition.

Conspicuous among his changes is the complete elimination of the supernatural. So far as it is retold in *A Fable*, the Bible story is retold in "natural" or, at most, in merely human terms. Like Jesus, Faulkner's Corporal restores sight to a blind person, but he restores it by arranging a surgical operation and not by a miracle. When resurrected, the Corporal is not miraculously restored to life; his body is merely blasted from its burial place near St. Mihiel. Faulkner's Jehovah, the Generalissimo, who unites with his deity portions of the New Testament roles of Pilate and Caesar and Satan, speaks in the lofty language of the Nobel Prize address about man's ability to endure and prevail; but the endurance he expects for man is only an earthly immortality, not "the heavenly one of his delusion." Faulkner's rehandling of the Christian story is *not*, in short, in "the orthodox Christian tradition." It is not even in the tradition of Christian humanism. At most, it is in the tradition of humanism alone, and of a bleak sort of humanism indeed.

For Faulkner does much more to the Bible story than merely strip it of the supernatural. At every point where the two narratives touch, he links the New Testament story with experiences that are physically repellant or offensive to our ordinary decencies. The linkage is, indeed, so consistent, so free of exception, that one feels it could have come only from calculated policy or from a habitual manner of thought. In the New Testament, Christ at the wedding feast turns water into wine; in *A Fable*, the Christ-Corporal arranges a wedding for a girl whose doughboy has "knocked her up." In the New Testament, the Christ is celibate; in *A Fable*, the Corporal is married to a Marseilles whore whom we might look on as rehabilitated except that there is nothing to rehabilitate; no other Faulkner character, not even the idiot Ike Snopes in *The Hamlet*, is so nearly an absolute cipher. In the New Testament, the story of the Annunciation and the Virgin Birth is one of dignity and poetic grace—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee." In *A Fable*, the same story becomes one of the casual seduction and abandonment of a wife-and-mother by an irresponsible who uses people and then throws them away. Instead of the elevation and the pathos of

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the Last Supper, *A Fable* dramatizes the grossness of the Corporal's followers, one of whom interprets the malaise of their Judas with the observation, "A day of rest at Chaulnesmont wasn't the right pill for that belly of his maybe," and all of whom are appropriately addressed by their jailer, "All right, you bastards. . . . Be pigs." Instead of the repentant thief addressed by the crucified Jesus—"This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"—*A Fable* offers the simian, idiotic French criminal whose companions have to buoy him up at his execution by uttering the magical promise, "Paris." Paradise—Paris! Dumb Frenchmen, like good Americans, go there when they die.

The consistent grossness of the gospel according to William Faulkner still dwells with us, still envelops us, if we turn from the incidents of *A Fable* to the contexture of verbal association, overtone and suggestion through which these incidents are conveyed—in short, to Faulkner's style. Not for Faulkner, of course, the simplicity of Luke's account of the journey of Mary to Bethelhem, where she "brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." Rather, for Faulkner, Marthe's account of the seduced and abandoned mother who fled "swollen belly and all because it could not be long now," and whose plight is understood by her daughters because they "had seen enough swelled female bellies to guess," and the casually public pathology of whose delivery is insisted on—"the straw, the dark stable and the cold, . . . the lantern, the strange and alien faces crowding downward above us, then the blood and lymph and wet." Not for Faulkner, either, the quietness of the Bible story of the burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea, who wrapped the body "in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone," where no man had yet lain. Rather, for Faulkner, the tense action of the passing of the Corporal's body through the wire barrier, while the imbecilic Marya looks with sexual fondness on the handsome sergeant-major, and the dialogue reaches a climax succinct and obscene: "Cut?" the man said.

"It, species of a species."

Not for Faulkner, either, any such mood as that of the piety of the three women toward the buried Christ; not for him the brilliance, the beauty and the drama of the Biblical story of the Resurrection—"The angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door. . . . His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow." Faulkner's imagination creates, instead, the nightmare-journey of the squad sent to Verdun for the body of the Unknown Soldier: their sordid drunkenness; the sergeant's snarls and curses; his words to the obsessed mother of Theodule about "rotten meat" and "one stinking carcass"; their progress over the shell-blasted infernal earth and down into the intolerable stench of catacombs where the very floor is "viscous and greasy"; their "tumbling" the body of the Unknown Soldier like madmen into the coffin; their selling it as Theodule to the obsessed mother for money with which to buy drink; and the postalcoholic daze in which, to fill the coffin again, they purchase the body of the Corporal. The offices which in the Bible are performed by the three women—"And when the Sabbath was passed, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome," who had bought sweet spices, "came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun"—these offices are performed for the Corporal by the drunken squad who awaken to a sunset they mistake for sunrise, following an afternoon spent "sprawled and snoring in one inextricable filth of straw and urine and vomit and spilled brandy and empty bottles."

What then, in brief, is the view of mankind that Faulkner has brought to such intense, dynamic life in *A Fable*? All too obviously it is not that man is good, for goodness appears only rarely and ineffectually. Nor is it precisely that man is evil in the Biblical, the traditional sense; the sin of pride, for example, appears only in the Generalissimo. In overwhelming degree, Faulkner's view is that man is not really man but subman, a creature subrational, disgusting, bestial, filthy and devoted to boundless and incalculable folly. This—the hopeless bestiality of man, reiterated as it is in a hun-

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dred incidents and in innumerable verbal shadings and implications—is the actual, underlying theme of *A Fable*.

That theme is not the creation of an author who expresses the "sentimental, Protestant ethos" of his region, or who works within an orthodox Christian tradition which "posits original sin." For the Christianity of *A Fable* is at best fragmentary. It stops—where actual Christianity begins—with a conviction of guilt; and in stopping there it misses entirely the dynamics of a living Christian faith. In *A Fable* there is no lasting escape from evil; there is no divine atonement, no salvation, no regeneration, no pilgrimage of the soul toward Dante's heavenly paradise or Milton's paradise "within thee, happier far." The "Christianity" of *A Fable* is a Christianity *manqué*, a Christianity shorn of beauty and spiritual power, a Christianity that offers to man only the masochistic pleasure of contemplating his own corruptions.

And if Faulkner's view of man is not Christian, neither is it, in any legitimate sense, humanistic. Presumably it was meant to be. Presumably the author meant to realize to the uttermost the worst that could be thought of man, and still assert powerfully man's ability to endure and prevail. But if this was indeed his intent, we can only suppose that some overpowering drive within him—some *daimon* out of the subconscious, some wracking interior conflict, some desperate overwhelming need for the catharsis of expressing once and forever his sense of cosmic outrage—wrested his story into such disproportion as to destroy its presumable purpose. The very imagery of *A Fable*, subtly permeated as it is with suggestions of defeatism and the Freudian death-wish, tells against any positive belief in humanity. If, in fact, Faulkner set out in *A Fable* to "help man endure by lifting his heart," he reached a disastrously unintended goal. You do not lift the heart of man by grinding his face to obliteration in the dirt.

Yet, devastating as is Faulkner's handling of humanity, any sensitive mind must feel at times something of the mood of *A Fable*—the mood, that is, of uncontrollable exasperation with humanity's incredible callousness and folly; and some of the most sensitive minds of the race had already expressed that mood powerfully. The Faulkner of *A Fable* is akin to the Voltaire of *Candide*, with his mordant account of the misadventures of man in the worst of all possible worlds. He is even more closely akin to the Swift of *Gulliver's Travels*, with his blast at the British as the "most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth," and his portrayal of the human being, the Yahoo, as the most filthy and unteachable of all animals. And he is closest kin of all to the Mark Twain of *The Mysterious Stranger*, where, as in *A Fable*, an archetypal story-pattern acts as carrier for the author's magnificent contempt for man, a "museum of diseases, a home of impurities," a being who "begins as dirt and departs as stench." Whatever its original intention, the aesthetic outcome of *A Fable* is of the same kind as that of *Gulliver's Travels* or *The Mysterious Stranger*. Like its predecessors, the book is in effect a serious and bitter satire, although the force and morbidity of Faulkner's imagination lend it a psychologically destructive power that belongs to it alone.

Now if an author "sees" the human condition as degraded past all rational hope, if that is honestly his vision of man and man's world, then it is assuredly his privilege to give that vision whatever life and form he can. Presumably Faulkner exercised that privilege in *A Fable*. But it is the critic's privilege—indeed, his obligation—to make clear precisely what that vision is. And if the critic accepts T. S. Eliot's dictum that aesthetic criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical viewpoint, his obligation obviously extends farther. He cannot in good conscience stop with an assessment of a novel merely in terms of experience-left-with-the-reader; he must go on to a judgment of that experience in terms of human value.

But it is just these basic obligations that most of the recent criticism of Faulkner has failed not merely to fulfill, but even to recognize. I would not undervalue the work

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of some of Faulkner's interpreters, notably H. M. Campbell and Malcolm Cowley; but there is no escaping the fact that the achievement of Faulkner criticism has so far been partial and out of balance. That criticism, in its concern with structure and symbol, has neglected value and meaning. No Faulkner critic, for example, can say with assurance just what view of the human condition is brought to life in *The Hamlet* or *As I Lay Dying*, though in either book it is quite certainly different from the macabre intensities of *A Fable*. Nor does the present body of Faulkner criticism offer much more than a beginning in the judgment of his work by the criterion of its lasting human value. Can any Faulkner specialist—to take a single case—speak with precision about the blend of guilt-sense and defeatism that sounds like a sullen underchord through so much of his fiction?

So far, Faulkner has been critically perceived in terms of his immense inventiveness, his archetypal symbols, his complex structural patterns, and recently his expressions of moral and social idealism. In the artificial climate of this criticism, the lofty utterance of the Nobel Prize address is applied generally to his fiction, though its relevance is obviously limited; and his earthier, more daemonic utterances are either ignored or softened under the illumination of a halo supplied by critical piety. Now this preponderant concern with just some few of the myriad facets of Faulkner's mind, this misfocusing of the critical camera so as to bring his idealism up out of all proper proportion, is rapidly producing a picture of Faulkner's work out of all relevance to the experience that actually comes off his pages at the reader. And as with the work, so with the author. Out of the special and partial concerns of Faulkner criticism there is growing—is there not?—the personal portrait of a genius astonishing in his technical virtuosity, magical in his command of myth and symbol, idealistic, and committed even in his agonies to the side of the angels—a concept which in its totality is the more insidiously false because every separate part of it is true. In a most genuine sense, it is not the author's own tortured and bitter satire on man, but this creation of the Faulkner critics, this substitution of the partial person for the whole person, that constitutes, for our decade, *the* Faulkner fable.

For the rapid bourgeoning of the fable, Faulkner himself is not too deeply responsible. Its main sources are the preoccupations and the special techniques of modern criticism, whose selective lenses are so likely to afford only partial and fragmented views. Perhaps that sort of criticism has taken us as far in the understanding of Faulkner as it can; the vitriolic *Fable*, certainly, will remain forever opaque and impenetrable to its particular insights. And if this is in reasonable measure true, now is the time for some radical new approaches in the critical study of Faulkner. It is time to liquidate the Faulkner fable, to try to gauge just what residual experience a Faulkner book leaves with the reader, and to attempt a judgment of that experience in terms of its whole and lasting value.

An accurate appraisal, a reasonable judgment, will be anything but easy. For any critic, Faulkner is the most deceptive of subjects, not because of any willful dishonesty on his part, or any lack of aesthetic integrity, but because of his intellectual abundance, his astounding and apparently quite sincere sophistries, his self-contradictions, his symptoms of inner stress and still unreconciled conflict. The critic who would explore the treacherous terrain of Faulkner's imagination would therefore do well to walk warily, remembering always that the marsh lights of Faulkner's idealism flicker often enough above a veritable inferno of the violent, the destructive and the daemonic. But once that terrain is blown clear of the fog of Faulknerolatry, a score of pitfalls, now hidden, will startle into vision in naked clarity. No one, *then*, should fall into a recent critic's error of calling the *Fable* "a Christian allegory"; no one should be so naïve as to take its actual meaning from the piety of the three crosses imprinted on its cover.

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The Enchanted Glass

LOREN EISELEY

On the roof of a building opposite the one in which I sit writing, a radar scanner is endlessly sweeping the horizon. It waits upon the coming of the Great Disaster for which it was built, but in the meantime, it records indifferently the passage of birds going about the old-fashioned business of nature. A little white cabbage butterfly passed by so close a moment ago that I was led to hope that even its tiny wings may have roiled faintly the waiting screen. Perhaps, I think, this is the way the scanners will go on into the next century, waiting, waiting for the Moment, while across the invisible beams will pass birds and butterflies and beetles until the meaning is forgotten and the current dies in the wires.

The mind itself is a kind of scanning device, picking up miscellaneous objects and passing bird wings, waiting to record the supreme joy or the ultimate catastrophe, but often, in the end, unsure for what it waited, the birds and an uncontaminated sky at evening having come, through long surveillance, to contain meaning enough for the heart. We may suspect that Bacon was right when he called the mind of man an enchanted glass, but wrong in some slight measure when he castigated it as full of superstition which should straightway be reduced and the enchantment eliminated. He wanted, he said, to put nature to the question, and with forthright Elizabethan violence, rack out of her, her secrets. That we now possess a few of those secrets is the reason for those slowly turning eyes that stare forever into night and distance from the rooftops of the city.

By contrast, all I have to report in the way of the day's marvels is that I saw an unidentified small bird drinking, upside down, from a slowly dripping faucet on an outside wall. He seemed to know very well what he was about, for he arrived with decision and wasted no time in getting his pert head thrust into the mouth of the faucet. It was a quite remarkable sight that would, I am sure, have pleased old White at Selbourne, or any one of those English naturalists who have regaled us for three centuries with the ways of bats at dusk, worms in the lawn, or the owl in the church tower.

There are two streams of thought in Western culture, and though sometimes partially commingling their courses, they have come down these last three hundred years feeding different minds, serving different purposes, and mutually eschewed by the intolerant of both parties. Bacon is the spokesman for the one point of view, and men of the caliber of Gilbert White and W. H. Hudson are representative of the other. The Baconian school is severely experimental, unaesthetic and empirical. Its opposite, deriving from such parson naturalists as John Ray and Gilbert White, is literary, personal and contemplative.

It is not necessary to take sides in this perennial controversy. The good men, like Charles Darwin, have always known the best that could be derived from either point of view, but that a difference exists is clear. The scientist is seeking the connecting links, the underlying laws controlling the disparate manifestations of the phenomenal world. He seeks to apply the principles he

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discovers to human advantage. As his technical knowledge and the severity of his discipline increases, he is apt to find himself more and more removed from visible nature and its emotional connotations, more and more preoccupied with the inner constituents of things, until he has literally dissolved them away into fields of force, warps in space, or other abstractions.

The old-fashioned contemplative naturalist, on the other hand, is telling an essentially personal story. He may make use of scientific theories, he may accept the facts of evolution or acknowledge the likelihood that we live in an expanding universe. Essentially, however, he is recording the personal element in his experience, the shifting colors in the enchanted glass of the mind which the extreme Baconians would reduce to pellucid sobriety. Hudson, speaking of the aged men in *The Land's End*, and passing from their worn faces to a vision of everlasting rest in a "remote desert land where is no sound of singing bird nor of running water," is bringing before the reader his own vision of the gray-blue color of eternity; or, in his account of a crow-scarer on a lonely heath who ran a great distance only for the pleasure of seeing Hudson cycle past, he is conveying, poignantly, a sense of the elemental loneliness of the countryman. These are personal experiences capable of being shared by every perceptive human being. They are part of that indefinable country which lies between the realm of natural objects and the human spirit which moves among them.

The recounting of such episodes may be scorned by some as trivial and unimportant, but they contain fragments of a natural history so vast, shifting and impermanent as to confound the strict empiricist. It is the natural history of the human soul itself, and it contains all the color which lies in the enchanted glass. Naturalists like Hudson, though they speak of common creatures such as birds and garter snakes, move through fields denied to ordinary men, so that on one of Hudson's memorable journeys, that companionable snake racing at his side became, for him, a mysterious mottled monster extending out of sight across the endless leagues of the South American savannah. The menace of distance had become personalized.

It is thus apparent that the naturalist of letters and the specialized scientific investigator have, in some degree, different ends in view. That they occasionally accuse each other, on the one hand of "mysticism," and on the other of dullness bred of purely factual observation and objectivity, is unfortunate and due, in some measure, to misunderstanding. The modern world does not lend itself to contemplation. Over and beyond the insatiable appetite of the public for accounts of new and miraculous discoveries—discoveries which cannot be produced with the speed at which press and public demand them—human life itself has become frenetic and excitement-loving.

We are used to being hurled headlong by plane and motor from one natural marvel to another, upon commercialized vacations. In Gilbert White's day an intelligent villager of small, independent means read a few favorite classics, saw a few friends, and could, if he was so inclined, spend his days in unhurried contemplation. His masterpiece, if he was so gifted as to produce one, might, as in White's case, be the single incident of a lifetime. Today writers jostle each other for a few weeks of publicity, and vanish, being swept aside by an unending stream of new books which clamor for the reader's attention. In such an atmosphere tongues grow more brazen, and relatively few will prefer to meditate upon the sex life of a microscopic infusorian rather than to see what can be turned up in the daily tabloid.

Still, the great tradition has never quite been broken in English literature, and every so often the seemingly indifferent public appears to generate a passing memory of the woods and waters out of which it has so recently emerged, as in the case of *The Sea Around Us*. It will then rush forth in a body to purchase some surprisingly good book whose author may have been writing in the same vein for years without previously gaining any but the most meager

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audience. Nor, to be truthful, can it be guaranteed that the successful author may not still be addressing that same small audience after the unpredictable locust swarm has streamed away in a new direction.

The past year has yielded some surprisingly fine nature books, though most would have to be designated as factual rather than contemplative in any deeply literary sense. In certain of these cases, however, there has been a kind of partial transformation of data, a light from beyond the horizon that shines through the author's work even while he practices the scientific approach. Such cases reveal the futility of precise categories in literature and even in science.

One man studies waterfowl for a lifetime and writes about their lives and migrations in such a manner that the colors in the enchanted glass, which the author sought to subdue to the purposes of sober science, are set to glimmering sympathetically by all who read his book. Another, equally devoted to rattlesnakes, writes in two huge volumes so elaborate and yet so living a treatise that every time I pass the books upon my shelf, a sound emerges—a dry and menacing rustle that takes me instantly into a year, long ago, when I slept with boxes of the creatures beneath my camp cot, and woke to their high-pitched buzz of protest when my tent mates slyly used them as a breakfast call. Another more wide-ranging professional mammalogist has sought to give us a scientific glimpse of the monkey kingdom, whose chief and most obstreperous representative is man. All are excellent books in their way, and worthy of analysis as examples of descriptive natural history at a very high level of scientific accuracy.

Afterward, we will come back to that more indefinable sort of book that contains overtones of thought which is not science, nor intended to be, and yet without which science itself would be the poorer. Decades may pass without the appearance of such a seer as Thoreau or Hudson. And if it be true that Thoreau, for example, was on occasion, weak in the identification of birds, he is cherished for quite other reasons, and these reasons, though now forced back into obscure corners of the modern mind, are still not without a certain power. They are the ineradicable shadows in the murky glass which can never be totally cleansed by Bacon's followers. For when the human mind exists in the light of reason, and no more than reason, we may say with absolute certainty that man and all that made him will be in that instant gone.

The books to which I have previously made passing reference are all the work of field naturalists: H. A. Hochbaum,[1] Laurence M. Klauber,[2] and Ivan Sanderson,[3] who, with the exception of Mr. Sanderson, are not extensively known to literary circles. Supremely honest, supremely accurate observers quick to admit a lack of knowledge concerning points on which knowledge is not available, their delight in what is truly and not speciously marvelous enhances the scientific value of their work and carries it toward the domain of literature.

Klauber's two-volume treatise on rattlesnakes is obviously a labor of love more characteristic of John Ray's era than our own; immense in scope, it dwarfs anything previously written on the subject. It has been years in the making, and is unlikely ever to be duplicated. Physically, the two volumes are an unusually fine example of good bookmaking, and a handsome addition to any bookshelf. More importantly, they are eminently readable. Even the folklore of the subject is treated extensively.

But what is so marvelous about rattlesnakes, it may be asked, that Mr. Klauber, with the unparalleled acquiescence of his wife, should have harbored them in his basement for over thirty years? Let us take just one example. In times past one used to hear occasional speculations among naturalists as to why animals did not show more variations in the sense organs with which they were equipped. As knowledge of un-

[1] *Travels and Traditions of Waterfowl* by H. A. Hochbaum, University of Minnesota Press, 1956.

[2] *Rattlesnakes: Their Habits, Life Histories, and Influence on Mankind* by Laurence M. Klauber, 2 vols., University of California Press, 1956.

[3] *The Monkey Kingdom* by Ivan Sanderson, Hanover House, 1957.

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(Continued from Page 482)

seen radiations grew, it seemed strange that other distance receptors than those concerned with light and sound and smell should not occasionally be developed. Today we hear a great deal about homing projectiles that center in upon the heat emanating from a factory or other objective. The truth is that man has long been anticipated in this aspect of the arms race. In the rattlesnake there is a deep pit on either side of the head which is more conspicuous than the nostril. The significance of this pit had been speculated upon for over a century.

After many theories had been discarded, it was discovered, some twenty years ago, that the pits were actually heat-receptor organs. Experiments revealed that the sensitive diaphragm in the pit reacted to radiating heat impinging upon it. Thus rattlesnakes are aided in locating warm-blooded prey, or potential enemies at night, by a receptor totally lacking in most forms of life, but extremely advantageous, over short distances, to a nocturnal hunter. The stereoscopic centering of the sensations enables the snake not only to sense the warm object but to judge its direction with great accuracy. Ingenious experiments with covered light bulbs showed that the snakes would strike at them quite accurately, although they could not detect the same bulbs when these were cooled to the prevailing temperature.

There is something intriguing about the fact that the human precursor and the rattlesnake seem to have entered the world at the same time, though in opposite hemispheres. Thoreau, in his voluminous journals, would scarcely have resisted philosophizing on so appealing a point had the facts been available to him; but here we pass into another landscape—the wavering and elusive world of water and clouds.

For many years Albert Hochbaum has lived on the south shore of Lake Manitoba in a district celebrated for its wildfowl marshes. As director of the research station organized by the North American Wildlife Foundation, he has devoted his life to the study and protection of migratory water birds. I know of no recent book on the subject which is more original, more stimulating to thought, or—in the delicate tracery of Mr. Hochbaum's line drawings—more appealing. As his title indicates, this book deals exclusively with the travels of the wildfowl of the inland waterways. Instead of the nook-and-cranny world of the reptile, we are following the geese over vast marshes and through floating cloud wisps as the turning face of the planet rolls beneath us. Mr. Hochbaum believes that in addition to the instinctive elements of the migratory habit there remains a residiuum of behavior which is learned and, as he puts it, "traditional."

Man, as the biologist is slowly learning, is not the only creature who transmits acquired behavior. Every season now there pass above the ponds and sloughs of the Middle West, geese and ducks who never think of nesting in places which might prove attractive to them. Yet we know that historically these areas once contained an indigenous wildfowl population. Today the birds all head northward not because of pure instinct but because a tradition, like a human culture cut short by some catastrophe, has been wiped from their memory. The offspring of the more southward nesting ducks were destroyed with their parents in the unrestricted slaughter of the nineteenth century. The birds that still pass on the great migrations have a traditional memory only for the places of their northland birth. We may speak of this as tradition rather than instinct because it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that if, when young, fledgling birds are shipped to an area far from their original birthplace and allowed to gain their first experience in this new region, they will return in later years if not molested. If they nest successfully, a home tradition will be renewed in successive generations. Like some human beings, the birds have a passionate attachment to the surroundings of their birth and will come pitifully back to them through a hail of gunfire. As Mr. Hochbaum remarks, the salvaging of wasteland and destruction of small bodies of water bodes ill in the com-

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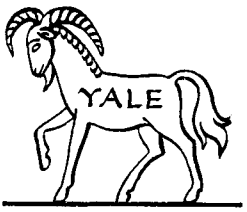

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ing years, even for waterfowl which are still numerous.

We shake our heads over the unmerciful slaughter that destroyed the passenger pigeon, but there are many aspects of today's legalized hunting which are still far from satisfactory. Even under control there is something revolting about man's eagerness to kill for no purpose. Yet even man, restless denizen of the monkey kingdom though he may be, has not, in all cultures, evinced such heartless proclivities. Here in the West a tradition has arisen which has been subtly encouraged past the pioneer period by the arms and sports equipment industries. There is about it some of the same artificiality that is so painfully evident in the commercialized modern Christmas.

Mr. Sanderson's *Monkey Kingdom* is one of the best popular treatments of the existing primate order which has appeared in some years. It is beautifully illustrated in color and the text is tastefully augmented by the personal anecdote and observation which Mr. Sanderson knows so well how to handle unobtrusively. One may differ here and there upon detail—I, for one, do not place as much stock in the Himalayan snow man as Mr. Sanderson, nor do I regard *Homo heidelbergensis* as a "near giant"—but these are small quibbles. The real impact of the book lies in the impression which it gives of that multifaced group of creatures who bear, in so many and, to our minds, distorted ways, the features of man.

Hidden mostly in the dense rain-forests of the tropics, so that they are little known to the layman, is an array of creatures, sad, volatile, gentle and pugnacious, creatures which, if they were all arranged in a single room, would give us the impression that we were walking through a hall of distorting mirrors. Here is man in almost all his guises, with appropriate colors to match. To a discerning mind there is just a touch of the satanic lurking beneath this innocent natural history. It is, perhaps, the uncanny satanism of the line which gave rise to man. Still, if there are too many flashes of scarlet, too many morbid blues and projecting fangs, there are also soft-furred, innocent-eyed creatures whose hands alone remind us of the way we have come. It is a strange magic—that of the monkey kingdom—and most frightening, for now the whole earth has fallen into the hands of one member of that order. It is as if in him the full range of the room of mirrors were represented—terror and arrogance, greed and cruelty—and, caught, like some echo from another world, a rare vast pity.

It is this last, this final flower of civilized intelligence which brings us to Joseph Wood Krutch's latest book.[4] Here description, analysis, have become secondary to understanding. If understanding is not to be had, then wonder. Even the little *Volvox* rolling through its minute world is touched by a fragile sympathy which is neither sentimental nor exaggerated. John Ray, one of the first of the parson naturalists, knew this feeling. Charles Darwin, associated in our minds with the raw struggle for existence, jotted similar sentiments into his notebook as a young man in his twenties. All of Krutch's many essays upon natural history show this quality, but *The Great Chain of Life*, which draws us up the evolutionary ladder in Mr. Krutch's own urbane and gentle way, should have a great civilizing influence among those not too closely wedded to the routine of the laboratory.

It has always struck me that something about the tradition of their literary natural history has given the English field observers a special quality which we are just beginning to emulate. In a book published a few years ago[5] Richard Perry recounted his stay on Lundy to study the island sea birds. In this book, which can be commended to all students of bird behavior, I want to touch upon just one point which has pertinence to our theme, and which illustrates once more the way in which pure science in a sensitive hand can begin to pass imperceptibly into literature.

Mr. Perry gives a graphic picture of the

[4] *The Great Chain of Life* by Joseph Wood Krutch, Houghton Mifflin, 1956.

[5] *Lundy: Isle of Puffins* by Richard Perry. London: Lindsay Drummond, 1946.

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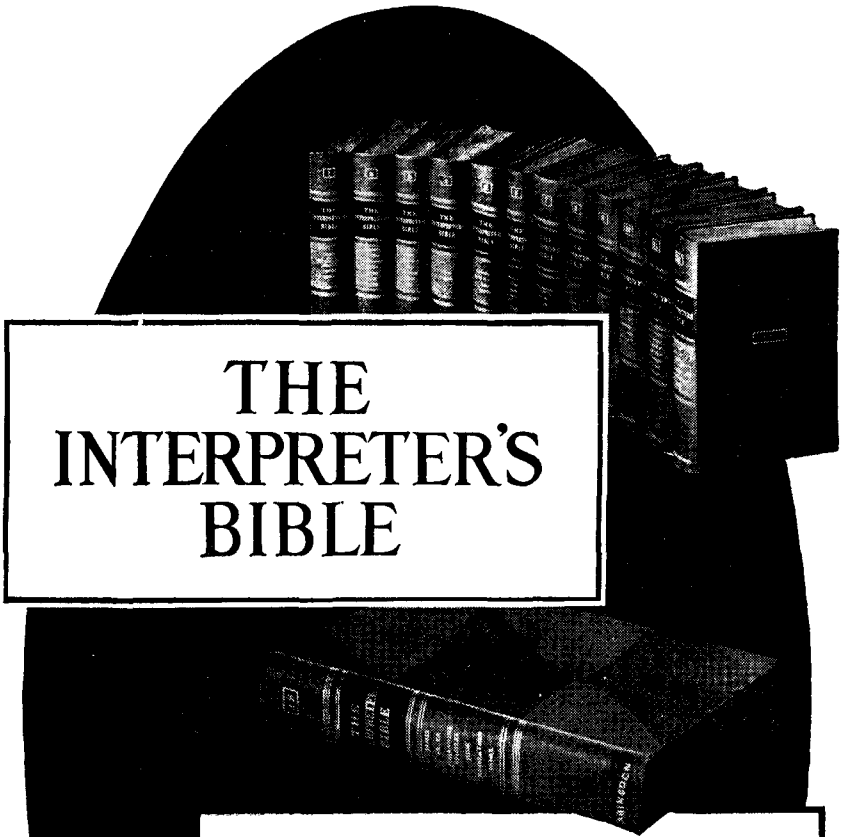

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life of the black-headed guillemots and razor-bills that nest along the island cliffs. Through sympathetic eyes one is led to see both the beauties and follies of their instinctive behavior—unmated birds going through the process of feeding imaginary chicks under their bellies—all the tangle of blocked and opposing instincts seeking expression on the crowded ledges of rock that look sheer into the sea. From those cliffs hovered over by huge chick-eating gulls, the young birds must make their first unstable flight down to the sea. At the close of the nesting season the last chicks run a risk of being deserted as the call of the sea begins to take command over fading parental instincts. With visible sympathy Mr. Perry follows the tumbling flight of the last birds that may end in a gull's beak or in a smash on the rocks below. The lives of these birds are desperate beyond belief, desperate in their birth, their infancy, their confused service to life. From babyhood they have only their mother's wing to protect them from the gulls. The parental instincts are often confused, and confusion is death.

Santayana once observed that the universe is familiar and limited, or at least that this is our experience of it "in spite of its agitation like a cage full of birds." Perhaps, intricately entwined with this observation, lies something of the paradox between science and literature. Science is constantly striving to reduce that cage of agitated birds which is the universe to some kind of comprehensible order. In this it has achieved striking successes. In its applied phase, however, it is increasingly subjecting man to disruptions and interferences which have shaken his reliance upon the ancient continuity of things—the round of seasons, the solidity of the small social groupings that once made up his life and for which his nerves and body have been adjusted for a million years. He is now his own neurotic rat caught in the maze of an experiment over which he has well nigh lost control, and which progresses at a furious pace to some unknown and increasingly fearful destination. He may read desperately more and more facts —whether it be the habits of *Crotalus horridus* or the state of matter in the dark beyond Aldebaran. But this in itself will not restore his sanity or the confidence that was once entertained in green leaves or ducks going northward in the spring—things he demands for security, yet eternally destroys.

It is only when the great artist speaks familiarly in his ear—the great magician who knows intuitively the true nature of the magic glass, that its imposture may be indeed reduced. It does not lie within the power of science alone to make life or the shadows everywhere confronting it acceptable. Rather, it can be achieved only in that supreme synthesis of knowledge and emotional insight which is typified in one letter of the ill-fated John Keats. "If a sparrow," he wrote, "comes before my Window I take part in its existence and pick about the Gravel."

It is in the rarity, yet persistence, of such writing that one may occasionally grasp the fact that the evolution of humanity may still, even in our modern day, be nearer its beginning than its culmination. "For," Keats wrote again, "Men of Genius are great as certain ethereal chemicals operating on the Mass of neutral intellect." They and they alone have a power to create the worlds that permeate the enchanted glass of the social mind. It is for this, if for no other reason, that the flight of a guillemot chick in autumn should be observed by those to whom it can be doubly seen as a scientific event and at the same time as containing that marred quality of imperfection which makes man and the instinct-baffled guillemot a part of a drama only to be understood in sympathy and full catharsis when a great naturalist has shown us that man and the guillemot are one.

It is then that the flight of man down the dark crags of his own destiny takes on nobility. In that moment he knows and contains within himself leaf, man and falling bird. And if he cries out in protest, as the great poets have cried, it is not for himself, it is pity for a world that falls with him, and that loves, as he loves, the sunlight wrinkling the dark waters of oblivion.

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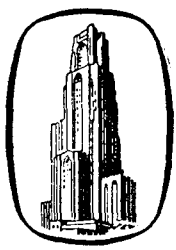

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Brief Comments

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By William Clyde DeVane. *Louisiana State University Press. $2.50.*

In these four Davis Washington Mitchell lectures delivered at Tulane University in March, 1956, Dean DeVane discusses, in historical perspective, a wide variety of topics of insistently grave concern to American higher education. He defines no new problems, proposes no new and guaranteed solutions. The discussion is suggestive rather than exhaustive. One can thus be grateful and at the same time earnestly wish for more. With mature insight and wisdom and with sensitive awareness of dangers and difficulties, with firm convictions and with tempered optimism, he looks at the American university in the twentieth century. There is in his discussion no trace of the arrogance and the contemptuous dogmatism that have marked too many of the utterances of those who share Dean DeVane's faith in "the liberating studies" and his concern for the maintenance of intellectual excellence in American higher education. Yet he is no less aware of the dangers that threaten: the dilution of quality, the bogging down into a "devastating mediocrity," and the continuing "blight of immediacy and practicality." There is throughout evidence of a deep, though not despairing, concern over the major problem of American education: to "reconcile democracy to intellectual quality."

The final lecture emphasizes the fact that "as a result of two great wars and the tides of modern history the American university has now taken, and will take more in the future, the place of intellectual primacy in the world." Our universities are thus themselves challenged to "have a vision of greatness." Thus far we have been largely followers, adapters, disciples, not creators or masters. "Within the context of our democ-

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racy we must recognize the place and importance of the uncommon man." The university must originate the new ideas by which our society and the world must progress. "Given time," Dean DeVane believes, "we shall be equal to the challenge."

GOODRICH C. WHITE

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF EDUCATION. Papers and discussions by William G. Pollard, E. Harris Harbison, Alan Paton, Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., John Courtney Murray, S.J., Jacques Maritain, Georges Florovsky, Reinhold Niebuhr, Stephen F. Bayne, Jr. Edited by Edmund Fuller. *Yale University Press. $4.00.*

One does not expect final answers or a pat program to emerge from a symposium such as that which marked the fiftieth anniversary of Kent School, but it is reasonable to hope for a deepened understanding of the "Christ and culture" question, particularly as it applies to general education. That expectation is not disappointed here. Of the many conferences on the same subject, this is one of the richest in seminal insights.

Running through the papers and discussions is the assumption that the experiment of secular civilization has been tried and is coming to an end because it lacks adequacy to meet either the intellectual or the psychological needs of man in his wholeness. "The Christian renaissance" is the implied theme of the conference. The fact of the renaissance is the starting point for many of the papers. There is not a weak or superficial one in the lot—no surprise, considering the list of participants—but for this reviewer there was especial freshness in Paton's discussion of community, Shepherd's exposition of the Eucharist, Maritain's analysis of voluntary religious activities on the campus, and Bayne's presentation, "God Is the Teacher."

All in all, this is a book which the secularist, however little he believes in or hopes for a "Christian renaissance," will neglect to his own impoverishment. It offers no glib answers; it explores many depths that demand the attention of all who are concerned with education.

CHAD WALSH

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The Tower of Babel by Thomas Merton (*limited edition only*) $30.00

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MODERN SCIENCE AND CHRISTIAN BELIEFS. By Arthur F. Smethurst. *Abingdon. $4.00.*

This book is an important essay in the field of Christian apologetics by a competent theologian, scientist and philosopher. After discussing historically the Christian climate in which the presuppositions of modern science arose and the general principles of the relationship of the scientific and Christian views of the world, the author presents his fundamental thesis that there is no necessary conflict between the two.

Specific problems arising out of the physical, biological and psychological sciences are thoroughly discussed in the second third of the book, and the final third deals with the problem of miracles and of creeds in an informed and reasonable way. Lengthy appendices present and critically assess trends in modern philosophy (Logical Positivism, Marxism and Existentialism) and the typical modern apologetic positions of Rudolf Bultmann and Karl Heim.

The author's point of view may be described as typical English reasonableness which is neither Thomist nor Barthian, although he shows sympathy and appreciation for Mascall's and Heim's work in the same field. For the reviewer, this approach blurs the deepest character of the problem but still leaves open within the author's general framework an opportunity for this depth to appear.

The book, therefore, is an excellent basis for the apologetic presentation of Christianity to anyone with intellectual difficulties and for use in universities and theological seminaries where Christianity attempts to escape obscurantism in relation to modern science, psychology and philosophy.

A. T. MOLLEGEN

ALEXANDER HAMILTON: Youth to Maturity, 1755-1788. By Broadus Mitchell. *Macmillan. $8.75.*

Professor Broadus Mitchell, of the Economics Department of Rutgers University, has completed the initial half of the first

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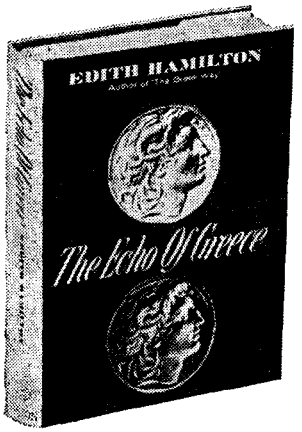

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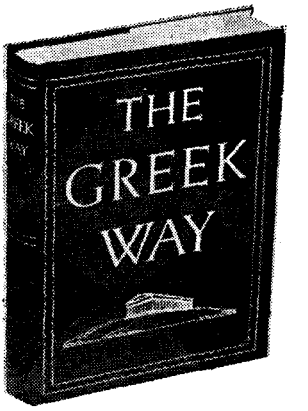

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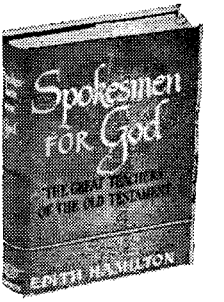

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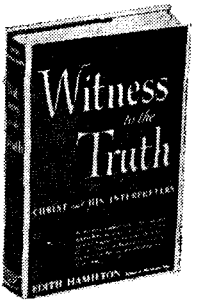

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full-dress biography of Alexander Hamilton we have. It is an impressive performance and it will have to be read by all scholars concerned with the founding of the Republic: for every obscure point in Hamilton's life is cleared up, every previously unanswered question is disposed of, every personal association is run down and its significance discussed. One can—as a result of Professor Mitchell's painstaking research (demonstrated in nearly two hundred pages of footnotes)—almost make up a day-by-day chronology of Hamilton's goings and comings; and this is important, for we have known less about this great man than we have of any of his contemporaries.

Professor Mitchell has imposed a limitation upon himself and naturally we must respect it: he wants "the facts" to be "allowed to speak for themselves"; in consequence, this is not a "Life and Times" of Alexander Hamilton but only a "Life." To what extent, therefore, Hamilton was influenced in his thinking by the explosive nature of the world about him the author does not speculate on at any length. He does, however, declare without qualification that Hamilton was sincere, devoted and honest, that he was a selfless patriot and not the leader of a class, and that he was the founder of the American nation. This is true and worth saying to an age which has accepted so many aspersions on Hamilton's character and motives so readily.

Professor Mitchell believes that Hamilton remained a dedicated statist—the precursor of the makers of today's welfare states; indeed, an eighteenth-century Keynesian—until the very end. This he will seek to demonstrate in his second volume, and it will be awaited with as much interest—although possibly not with universal agreement—as the first one so properly merits. Professor Mitchell has written an outstanding scholarly work.

LOUIS M. HACKER

MIGHTY STONEWALL. By Frank E. Vandiver. *McGraw-Hill. $6.00.*

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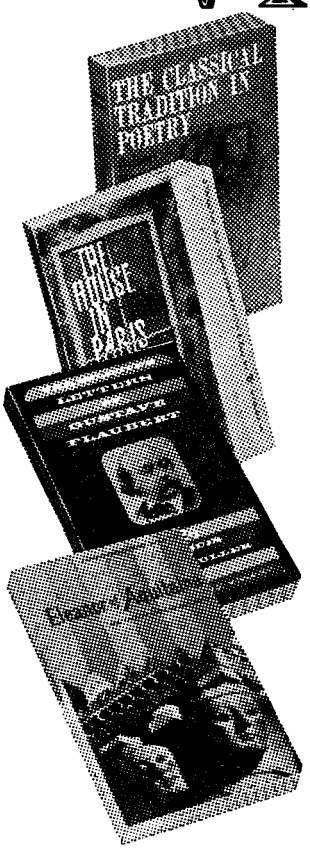

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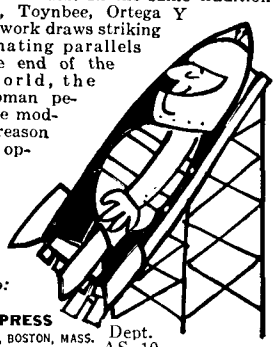

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Frank Vandiver's comprehensive, unfailingly interesting *Mighty Stonewall* is not the definitive study of the Confederacy's first and most durable hero of legend. Given the complexity of Jackson's character, his rare military skills and the nature of the violent events in which he acted and found his end, it is particularly unlikely that the last word on him will soon be said. In its absence, *Mighty Stonewall* should serve for years as an ample warehouse of well-picked, well-labeled and well-ordered facts, near-facts and opinions from which can be drawn widely varying possible interpretations of this dedicated, frighteningly single-minded man who knew no way of fighting but for keeps—the driving and driven early master of modern total war who compels in almost equal measure our terror, awe and pity.

It is to Vandiver's credit as well as to that of his subject, I think, that we find ourselves at the end of 536 pages still wanting to know much more than we do—or probably can ever hope to—of Thomas Jonathan Jackson of Virginia.

CHARLES O'NEILL

BRITISH ESSAYS IN AMERICAN HISTORY. Edited by H. C. Allen and C. P. Hill. *St. Martin's. $6.00.*

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landmark. Each essay is, in its manner and placement, a gem of precision. The topics discussed are, for the most part, commonplaces in American history: the Constitution, Hamilton and Jefferson, American Political Parties, the Turner Thesis, and Sectionalism and Reconstruction. However, the insight is objective and fresh even if on occasion a bit stilted. In addition, there are those topics, such as the American Military Tradition, the Briton's view of the impact of European immigration on America, American Radicalism and American Liberalism, which are not commonplace to the general reader.

There are sharp and provocative phrases such as Shepperson's observation that "There was no Marshall Plan for the South after the Civil War," and Cunliffe's "American isolationism had something in common with British insularity," and again, Max Beloff's "Wilson had abandoned neutrality for the United States in favour of neutrality for no one." These are the fresh approaches —the items which should lead you to wish to pursue with eagerness this British discernment.

To the seventeen essays, one might have wished three or four additions. It would have been sound reading to absorb the British view toward American agricultural history, the impact of religion, the intellectual-cultural scene, and, of course, their version of our scientific history.

MYRON L. KOENIG

THE SOLDIER AND THE STATE. By Samuel P. Huntington. *Harvard University Press. $7.50.*

Today, the author concludes, "America can learn more from West Point than West Point from America." While no book should be condemned because of one statement (a fugitive one at that), it *is* a startling comment and one this writer does not accept. The tail cannot wag the dog, at least, not yet—and (along with General Motors) certainly not such a tail.

But the book is not about West Point; rather, it deals generally with things military near and far in an attempt "to develop

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a way of looking at and thinking about civil-military relations." The author's effort to establish "a theoretical framework" fails; instead, using neither the discipline of the historian nor the manner of the sociologist (but some of his terms), he has produced a manual on how to deal with some civil-military relationships in particular. Germany, Japan and General MacArthur are all considered.

Three labels predominate: "professionalism," "liberalism" and, to a lesser degree, "conservatism." The last two become confused. The main point is that the officer corps is a professional group of men—like members of the bar or the clergy. But, "like the lawyer and doctor," the author adds, the officer "is not primarily a man of the closet" since "he deals continuously with people." What people? What closet?

Still, the book explores a vital and virgin area about which little is known and for which some sort of a plinth is needed. The search must continue. The bibliographical notes are full, fresh and well worth reading. The text is often less so. "The military ethic," writes the author, "is thus pessimistic, collectivist, historically inclined, power-oriented, nationalistic, militaristic, pacifist, and instrumentalist in its view of the military profession. It is, in brief, realistic and conservative."

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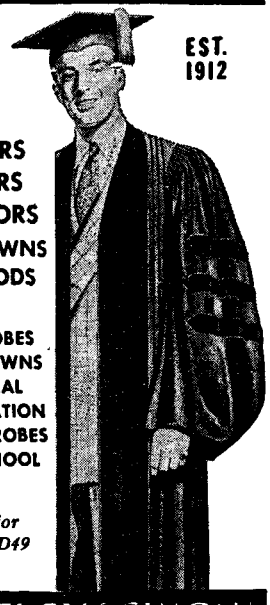

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GRACE L. BEEDE

THE YOKE AND THE ARROWS: A Report on Spain. By Herbert L. Matthews. *Braziller. $3.75.*

Only "one who loves Spain and hates Fascism" can gain insight into the elusiveness of modern Iberian character. This book takes its title from a Falangist symbol—once a medieval monarchical emblem—and the major problem facing the next Spanish government will be Francoist Spain's neo-medievalism. Mr. Matthews finds ominous echoes from the past in the restored ecclesiastic censorship, newly enriched clergy and landowners, and the classic poverty of average Spaniards. The Franco regime's sole assets are uncertain material advances, minimum social services, and maintenance of public order. Social apathy and fear of another civil war assist in maintaining order. However, in the younger generation Mr. Matthews sees lessening caution. Generalissimo Franco is one of countless autocrats to thwart a democratic impulse whose roots reach as deeply into Spanish medieval institutions as those of the present ultramontanism. The *caudillo* quotes the code of military discipline as justification; he no

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(Continued from Page 508)

longer needs Falangist ideology. Few Spaniards desire monarchy, but Franco has made no other provision for a successor. "If ever a man could say: 'After me, the deluge!' he is Francisco Franco."

Journalistic oversimplification occasionally mars Mr. Matthews' otherwise illuminating presentation of historical background. His poetic evocation of the Republic's struggle for liberty and his keen understanding of the noble absurdities in Spanish character are additional recommendations of this readable book.

RUSSELL P. SEBOLD

GHANA: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah. *Nelson. $5.00.*

In writing the autobiography of his own dramatic rise to power, the leader of the Gold Coast revolution has also told the story of the struggle for self-government of the former colony of the Gold Coast which on March 6 of this year became a sovereign state within the British Commonwealth, with Dr. Nkrumah at its head.

Born a goldsmith's son, his mother a member of a Nzima family which traces its origin back to Chief Aduku Addaie, Kwame Nkrumah went to the village school in Half Assini, later attending the Prince of Wales College at Achimota, and Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, where thirteen years after his graduation as a struggling student, he was awarded an honorary degree. A dynamo of energy, Dr. Nkrumah spent the years after 1945 in active politics, becoming general secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention in 1947, and founder and leader of his own party, the revolutionary Convention Peoples' Party. From then on his activities even more closely paralleled developments that led to the birth of a new nation: imprisonment for political agitation, followed by release to form a government as leader of government business, and later as the first prime minister of the Gold Coast.

This book is infused with a naïveté and a simplicity which must be true of the author. Kwame Nkrumah's ingenuousness and artless self-respect are those of a man who sees himself as an instrument in the history of freedom, one whose life has been given singlemindedly and wholeheartedly to a cause which has been his whole existence. His story is a testament of vision, dedication and unrelenting work.

DIANA CHANG

ATOMS FOR THE WORLD. By Laura Fermi. *University of Chicago Press. $3.75.*

The International Conference on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, held in Geneva in August of 1955, was an epochal event for two reasons: it emphasized officially and publicly for the first time the fact that atomic energy can and does have important uses not connected with military purposes; and it re-established the international scientific communication in the field of atomic physics which had been interrupted since World War II.

Laura Fermi, widow of Enrico Fermi, attended the Conference as the official historian for the American delegation. Her book is an explicit and informative history of the Conference from the inception of the original idea to the actual description of the twelve days in Geneva. Those who have read Mrs. Fermi's first book, *Atoms in the Family*, a lively, charming and highly personal account of her life with Enrico Fermi, will be surprised at the detached attitude and historical objectivity with which she recounts the American participation in the Conference. However, there is a wealth of detail, friendly and warmhearted interest in many of the participants, and even some reporting of the social events during the Conference.

It is reasonable to assume that this account of the historical and political events that led to the Conference reflects the official attitude of the United States Atomic Energy Commission. Everyone who is interested in atomic energy, in international co-operation, and in international scientific communication will find this book highly informative, interesting and important reading.

ROSEMARIE HAHN

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WOMANPOWER: A Statement by the National Manpower Council with Chapters by the Council Staff. *Columbia University Press. $5.00.*

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Here is a new book, *Womanpower*, which is a comprehensive study of women in paid employment and their contribution to our economy. Midwives galore presided over its birth, for the conference method was heavily relied upon in collecting the data for this book. Chapters dealing with various aspects of women in the labor force were written by members of the Council's staff. The result is an uneven, rather repetitious book which adequately presents the history of working women, the "revolution" in women's employment, educational and occupational trends, and the importance of women who work to an economy suffering from some acute shortages of trained workers. The first forty pages of the book are devoted to the Council's Statement and Recommendations. The Statement summarizes significant points brought out in the text. The Recommendations suggest further studies and more action by government on all levels, by education officials, unions, management and voluntary groups to encourage more effective development and utilization of womanpower. In general, the Recommendations underscore much that is already being done.

Although many of the facts in *Womanpower* have been presented in other publications, the volume is a contribution to a better understanding of the growing significance of the subject.

WINIFRED G. HELMES

MASS CULTURE: The Popular Arts in America. Edited by Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White. *Free Press. $6.50.*

It will come as no surprise to the publishers of this first comprehensive collection of writings on the popular arts that the volume will not become popular reading. Exciting, disturbing, even amusing in its various parts, the book requires and the subject demands some effort from the reader who would reach conclusions.

The two editors, having met in the preface to agree on the need for an interdisciplinary focus on the relationship between the mass media and society, shake hands and depart to their separate introductions. Rosenberg points to the threat: "Never before have the sacred and the profane, the genuine and the specious, the exalted and the debased, been so thoroughly mixed that they are all but indistinguishable." White—whose argument may be less appreciated by those who read such a book—believes that it is quite possible to separate the sheep from the goats if one does not panic when faced with stacks of comic books, flashing movie marquees and twitching television antennas: "It is just these mass media that hold out the greatest promise to the 'average' man that a cultural richness no previous age could give him is at hand."

It is this promise—broken or fulfilled—which prompted the forty-nine authors represented here to discuss the various perspectives of mass culture, mass literature (little remains to be said about Spillane), motion pictures, radio and television, popular music (carefully separated from jazz), card playing, Broadway theater (which can hardly be considered a popular art) and advertising.

Mass Culture is that important first gathering of men of intelligence, taste, and concern for the future of one of the most amazing phenomena of the century.

BETSY SAUNDERS

ART AND PSYCHOANALYSIS. Edited with an introduction by William Phillips. *Criterion. $8.50.*

This book brings together a fairly representative statement of the contribution psychoanalysis has made to the understanding of the creative process, the created work and the artist after about fifty years of analytic history. Posing more problems than it answers, flavored with pedantry, it still de-

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serves a place as a file between hard covers on the shelves of students concerned with the psychology of creativeness.

The book is a collection of twenty-six articles and lectures that have appeared in a variety of professional and popular journals. The contributors include analysts, literary critics and, in the person of Thomas Mann who provides a tribute to Freud, a creative writer of stature. The title is generically correct, but more precisely it is literature rather than the graphic, plastic or musical arts that are largely dealt with.

To account for this preponderance of literary references, Mr. Phillips suggests in his preface that the "studies in the other arts are much inferior—perhaps because ideology is more easily assimilated than form into psychoanalysis." Insofar as this is true, psychoanalysis can provide little more than erudite program notes, and these rather tedious ones, to a vibrant aspect of man's work. Inadvertently, this prefatory comment of the editor poses the problem and points the direction that must be taken if fifty years from now a similar collection will really be able to add to our understanding. Clinically, psychoanalysis is increasingly more concerned with form, supplanting the earlier analytic focus on ideas, concepts and explanations. This contemporary emphasis is changing psychoanalytic therapy and should have a similarly fresh impact on literary and artistic criticism.

NORMAN KELMAN, M.D.

LITERATURE AND THE IMAGE OF MAN: Sociological Studies of the European Novel and Drama, 1600-1900. By Leo Lowenthal. *Beacon. $4.95.*

In essays on Cervantes, Shakespeare, classical French drama, Goethe, Ibsen, and Hamsun, Professor Lowenthal treats literary works as sociological documents which present "a changing image of man" through three centuries. Rather than extracting merely a passage here and there, he seeks sociological meaning in the total form of each work—in the representation of character and action. He argues that other sociological methods have limitations which literary analysis can help to correct: The historian inevitably depersonalizes in order to see the broader aspects of his subject, and the biographer must see through the mask of his subject's public self. "It is the artist," writes the author, "who portrays what is more real than reality itself."

Nevertheless, the sociological approach to literature is also an abstraction from the whole, and the world created by literature is a world different from that which the sociologist wishes to explore. Literature's "more real" reality lies in its different reality. Professor Lowenthal's interpretive problem is to abstract temporal from timeless meaning, yet not to distort in the process. Much of what he offers as literary interpretation has been implied in different terms by literary historians, and his contribution to social history appears to lie in his substantiation from a new perspective of several established ideas. But agreement with other scholars working in different ways can be as significant a contribution as deviation, for the assumption of any science, social or physical, is total coherence.

The special danger of literary study of this kind is the tendency to discover in literary documents only what fits a pre-established attitude. Professor Lowenthal has faced it in seeking to treat the whole of each work. Nevertheless, his observations must be judged against this danger.

HAZARD ADAMS

THE FINE ART OF READING. By Lord David Cecil. *Bobbs-Merrill. $5.00.*

"To enjoy literature as it should be enjoyed is a task of immense difficulty," says the author in his title essay. The neophyte must undergo a long period of self-training. He must study the unique aesthetic quality of each book that he reads and its historical background. ("Without the work of scholars, it is impossible to get near the authors at all.") And he must sternly subdue any of his own opinions and prejudices which run counter to those of the author.

This high and solemn view of the fine art of reading sets the tone of a collection of lectures and occasional pieces on Shakesperian comedy, Jane Austen, Conrad, de la Mare, Hazlitt, Pater and others; also the

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author's inaugural address as Goldsmiths' Professor of English Literature at Oxford. The writing is graceful, and the judgments are judicious. The flashes of wit are so good that one regrets their rarity: for example, "Pater means to identify himself with his subjects; but more often he identifies his subject with himself. Botticelli, Leonardo, Michelangelo, present themselves before us, unexpectedly and improbably, as shrinking, shy, highly cultured souls, oscillating languidly between faith and belief and with marked Oxford accents."

ROBERT N. LINSCOTT

POLITICS AND THE NOVEL. By Irving Howe. *Horizon. $3.50.*

Mr. Howe takes as his point of departure a quotation from Stendhal: "Politics in a work of literature is like a pistol-shot in the middle of a concert, something loud and vulgar, and yet a thing to which it is not possible to refuse one's attention." This launches a series of analyses ranging from Stendhal through Dostoevsky and Conrad to Malraux and Orwell.

These are fascinating subjects, and Mr. Howe does very well by all of them. On *The Bostonians,* in fact, he has done probably the best analysis yet written. He is unfailingly intelligent and perceptive. But is this really enough? To write about giants like Dostoevsky and Stendhal is hazardous at best, and it requires, I think, a less cool and disinterested attitude than Mr. Howe seeks to maintain. Even a touch of megalomania would give his book more of the *élan* which it needs, which all criticism needs if it is to rise above the self-defeating role of handmaiden to the arts.

Except for a hint in his admiring study of Silone, Mr. Howe keeps his own politics secret, and as a result it is never quite clear what over-all effect the book is supposed to achieve. In other words, he shows us a series of pistols in the lobby of the concert hall, takes them all apart, describes their various mechanisms, but never tries aiming one and pulling the trigger.

OTTO FRIEDRICH

NOVELS INTO FILM. By George Bluestone. *Johns Hopkins Press. $5.00.*

Most of us, at one time or another, have climbed on a soapbox to condemn the movies for changing the story of a favorite book. Mr. Bluestone would have none of such argument. He believes that the film is independent, free to add that new ending or to leave several characters on the cutting-room floor. In judging the quality of any filmed novel his question is, Has the movie-maker discovered visual effects that interpret rather than repeat the material of the novel? In other words, Has he created a new form?

The films selected for discussion are *The Informer, Wuthering Heights, Pride and Prejudice, The Grapes of Wrath, The Ox-Bow Incident* and *Madame Bovary*—all but the latter creditable pictures. Each is analyzed by comparing novel and shooting-script and then viewing the film with script in hand. Alterations are carefully studied in the light of a broad knowledge of literature and motion picture history, and extensive research is in evidence on every page.

Mr. Bluestone's style can be heavy going (". . . conceptual images evoked by verbal stimuli can scarcely be distinguished in the end from those evoked by non-verbal stimuli") and sometimes his observations are obvious (". . . the novel is a linguistic medium, the film essentially visual"). But his book will be of value to students and critical movie-goers interested in motion picture aesthetics.

EDWARD KESSLER

MARK TWAIN OF THE *ENTERPRISE*: Newspaper Articles & Other Documents, 1862-1864. Edited by Henry Nash Smith, with the assistance of Frederick Anderson. Illustrated. *University of California Press. $6.00.*

The most obscure phase of Mark Twain's literary career has always been his twenty months as reporter for the Virginia City *Enterprise*—the start, that is, of his work as a professional writer. The *Enterprise* files having been burned in the eighties,

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we have had little to judge by except a few hoaxes and extravaganzas reprinted by California papers. These suggested that most of Mark's early humor was crude.

This new collection of his early work confirms the impression. Deriving mainly from scrapbooks kept by Mark's brother Orion, it is presumably a representative cross-section of his prentice writing. Some documents are still to seek—for instance, the early, volunteer contributions which won him the *Enterprise* job, and the first appearance of his famous pen name. Should these, or other items of biographical importance, come to light, still another volume of Mark Twain primitives may be justifiable. Otherwise, Mr. Smith's present compilation might as well be final. Crude personalities, and attempts to wring humor out of bad smells, emetics and purgatives, give little promise of the future author of *Huckleberry Finn* or even of *The Innocents Abroad*. No other of our major writers, not even Walt Whitman, had to cleanse himself of more trash before achieving artistic maturity. It is unlikely that any masterpieces perished with the *Enterprise* files.

DeLancey Ferguson

LETTERS OF JAMES JOYCE. Edited by Stuart Gilbert. *Viking. $7.50.*

It will be many years before the correspondence of James Joyce can be published in a manner approaching completeness. But now, thanks to the generosity of institutions and private owners, over four hundred letters to some fifty different relatives, friends and associates, about a third of whom are still living, have been collected and edited by Joyce's friend Stuart Gilbert. The general reader with a taste for letters and for Joyce will find this book immensely rewarding; students of Joyce will find it essential for the new and important information about the man and his work which it contains—although they may well ask why more letters could not have been included.

But what is here, although it sheds little light on twentieth-century literature in general, does give a fine picture of Joyce, the dedicated man of letters, intent on his own career, asking favors of his friends, absolutely devoted to his wife and children and often displaying a delightful wit. Over a third of the letters were written to Miss Harriet Shaw Weaver, Joyce's benefactor and literary confidante; they are filled with details of his work on *Finnegans Wake* and, for certain years, give a remarkably good picture of his day-to-day life.

Gilbert's introduction and notes on the letters provide the necessary background, and Richard Ellmann's chronology of Joyce's life corrects some old errors and includes much new information. Many new Joyce letters, including some to his brother Stanislaus and to his biographer Herbert Gorman, have recently arrived in America; it is greatly to be hoped that Mr. Gilbert may fulfill his intention of editing a second volume and that these may be available to him.

Herbert Cahoon

CLOSE TO COLETTE. By Maurice Goudeket. With an introduction by Sir Harold Nicolson. *Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. $4.00.*

In a series of informal sketches composed with simplicity and directness, M. Goudeket has given us an affectionate memoir of his wife, the great French novelist. They met when he was thirty-five, she fifty-two: their twenty-nine years of "unclouded happiness" are brightly illuminated here. Further, the author defines for us Colette's unique gifts as a writer and a person—the one being an unusually exact reflection of the other.

He shows us Colette, passionately domestic, "moving house," which she enjoyed hugely: by eight o'clock on such a day "the pictures were hung, a wood fire was crackling on the hearth." We see her ravishing a garden ("I would say to her, 'I suppose you are going to eat it as usual' "), and at her desk, concentrating so hard on her writing she would get colder and colder: "she used, in the end, to look like a cocoon." And, finally, we see Colette in her famous bedroom, surrounded by Chinese crystal balls, pictures of fruits and flowers, books on butterflies, eighty-one years old and dying, but doing even this "with a movement of infinite grace."

Colette lived with magnificent intensity,

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but she brought to her writing "all the virtues of the French artisan—humility, patience, self-exaction, pleasure in a well-finished article." An essentially primitive woman who wrote in a style as precise and elegant as any since the seventeenth century, "she produced an immense body of work in which you could search in vain for 10 lines which do not contain some image of savour, some penetrating notation."

Savour and penetration are here, too, in M. Goudeket's eloquent testament of love.

JOAN CUYLER

POETS IN A LANDSCAPE. By Gilbert Highet. *Knopf. $6.50.*

In the introduction to his new book, Gilbert Highet writes of his recent purposeful meanderings in Italy, ". . . the Italy which was moulded by Rome and educated by Greece, the Italy which was for many centuries the focus of a magnificent civilization . . . that Italy became real to me as it had never been before." Mr. Highet revives that reality for the readers of *Poets in a Landscape*. It is a beautiful book, written out of a broad knowledge of the classical past and out of a deep love for the works of those poets who are, in Carlyle's phrase, "the soul of [that] past."

The poets in the landscape are Catullus, Vergil, Propertius, Horace, Tibullus, Ovid and Juvenal. Their collective lives cover the span from 87 B.C., when Catullus was born, to, roughly, the middle of the second century after Christ, when Juvenal died. The period embraces Rome's last golden days and the beginning of her decline, when she grew "instinct with conflict" between Christian thought and pagan culture, "Romans and provincials." Though Mr. Highet treats of the time (in a final chapter mainly), the decline and fall are not his main concern.

As the title suggests, his main concern is with the poets and the landscape. The lives and works of the poets are given fresh meaning by re-creating the landscapes which, to quote Carlyle again, "filled their eyes" and "fed their minds." Not the least of delights in a lucid and wholly delightful book are the new translations, particularly of Catullus and Horace.

Mr. Highet has written (and doubtless will write) more searching books than *Poets in a Landscape*, but he will be hard put to write a book more fascinating.

SAUNDERS REDDING

BEST POEMS OF 1955: Borestone Mountain Poetry Awards 1956. Edited by Robert T. Moore. *Stanford University Press. $3.50.*

The respect which the Borestone Mountain Poetry Awards have earned is again justified in this eighth volume that brings together seventy-one poets and eighty-three of the "best poems" published in the English language during 1955. The work of new poets appears beside poems by Frost, Auden, Macneice and Penn Warren, and competes successfully with the brilliant poetry of W. S. Merwin, John Ciardi, Howard Moss and Richard Wilbur.

The standards of selection have been high: readers are nowhere exposed to less than good writing. The mode of many of these poems, however, is that of revelation rather than assimilation, recognition rather than familiarity, enumeration rather than synthesis, and compassion rather than love. This is to say that most of the poems of this collection strive for and come upon new ways of being and seeing; these become the acknowledgment that is the poem, a process of discovery, and only in the surer voices has enough personality or "language" been created for the poem to proceed from rather than toward determined values. Most of these poems explore, few of them venture toward defined objectives. As a result, myth, history, identity and prophecy are questioned, and compassion, a first step toward definition and assumption, is everywhere. The lack of center that renders any direction eccentric and any vision a revelation is an age's dilemma. That many among these poets do much to establish a still point and harmoniously to dispose the world with respect to it is high praise. Howard Moss well understands the limitations against which he and his fellow poets strive:

Of love, the view
To take is but another wintry one,
To wait for the new nestings of the sun.

ROBERT GAJDUSEK

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(Continued from Page 470)

Years and success, however, have scarcely changed Hemingway's basic view of the world. In the very first story, "Indian Camp," of his first book, *In Our Time*, an Indian who had listened to his wife screaming in labor for two days finally cut his throat because "he couldn't stand things, I guess." The tendency to cut one's throat because one couldn't stand things remained a constant in Hemingway's work. Ole Andreson, in "The Killers," didn't need to commit suicide. Unable to drive himself to continue fleeing the hired murderers, he simply lay in bed, waiting, because "there ain't anything to do." In *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway risked a metaphysical expression of his Biercean belief that in the midst of life we are in death. "Life . . . caught you in a trap," Frederick Henry reflects. "The world . . . kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of those you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry."

Hemingway's pessimism, despite his outbursts of romantic cynicism, has generally been an attitude of deep melancholy and resignation. His most extreme expression of this melancholy appeared in a very short story, "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," which begins with two waiters watching their last customer on the terrace, an old man who tried to commit suicide the previous week because "he was in despair . . . about nothing." One of the waiters silently sympathizes with the old man because he also dreads something that "was a nothing that he knew too well." With that knowledge, the waiter finally prays: "Our nada who art in nada, nada be thy name thy kingdom nada thy will be nada in nada as it is in nada."

More recently, Hemingway has attempted to affirm the stoic virtues as an armor against the omnipresent nada, but even his most "positive" books end in defeat and ruin. After Robert Jordan has achieved his bridge-blowing mission behind the Spanish Fascist lines in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, General Golz sums up the whole offensive, in which Jordan's death played only a tiny part: "Nous sommes foutus. Oui. Comme toujours. Oui. C'est dommage. . . . Rien à faire. Rien. Faut pas penser. Faut accepter." Golz's melancholy words could apply as well to the misery of Jake Barnes, the war-crippled hero of *The Sun Also Rises*, or to the defeat of Santiago, the poor fisherman in *The Old Man and the Sea*, whose great catch is destroyed by sharks. All of Hemingway's metaphysic, in fact, could be summed up as "Nous sommes foutus. Comme toujours."

Such total despair is inherently unbearable, and its only logical conclusion is suicide. This conclusion remains in the background of Hemingway's work, but Hemingway himself had experienced suicide so closely that he repeatedly described it with an almost hysterical revulsion. Robert Jordan remembers the day when his father shot himself and adds, "He was just a coward." It was Nick Adams' father, also a suicide, more understanding, who said that the Indian had cut his throat because "he couldn't stand things, I guess." If suicide is the logical end of total despair, there are two illogical alternatives. One is simply to continue, like Ring Lardner, feeling that "they ain't a wk. passes when you wouldn't get touched on the raw if they was any raw left." The other alternative to the wasteland is to create an oasis, as T. S. Eliot himself has done, reserving it to one's chosen few and leaving the rest of mankind to shrivel amid the rocks and sand. This was Hemingway's choice.

The celebrated "Hemingway hero," who is saved from damnation by what he called "grace under pressure," is a two-sided expression of Hemingway's values. Philip Young, in *Ernest Hemingway*, has provided the best analysis of these contrasting sides, which he defined as the "Hemingway hero" and the "code hero."

> The real hero is the protagonist who was up in Michigan, and was wounded while fighting as an American in the Italian army, who lived and wrote fiction in Paris; he is the generic Nick Adams. . . . The outlaws and professional sportsmen who have appeared along the way have

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taught the man to try to live by a code, but they are not the man himself. What is more, the lessons have not always been of the sort the hero can immediately master. . . . The Hemingway code . . . is made of the controls of honor and courage which in a life of tension and pain make a man a man. . . . This code . . . presents a solution to the problems of Nick Adams, of the true "Hemingway hero," and for Hemingway it is about the only solution.

In Hemingway's mind, however, the two types of hero face the same problem, and their application of the same "solution" can best be differentiated in terms of degree of consciousness. The protagonists, introspective and somewhat self-pitying, consciously exalt and attempt to follow the code. The brave matador and the brave soldier act out the same code while remaining largely unconscious of it. In either case, Hemingway's heroes represent his values, courage, honesty, self-restraint, toughness and resignation to survive the pain and defeats of the world that kills the very good and the very brave impartially. These values are perfectly genuine, but the essential falsity of Hemingway's work lies in his understanding of his own values and his attempt to express them. He endows his heroes not only with his code but with material proofs of the code virtues. They prove their bravery by shooting ducks, their worldly wisdom by drinking Valpolicella, their honesty by belligerent talk. Their toughness, instead of remaining implicit, is represented by boxing and shooting and what Sir Max Beerbohm once called "manlydom." In the course of Hemingway's self-corruption, the "solution" of Nick Adams becomes rhetoric in *Death in the Afternoon*, which in turn becomes self-parody in *Across the River and Into the Trees.*

Hemingway's romanticism is expressed most clearly in his frequently admired juxtaposition of love and death. These two themes appear in Hemingway's earliest work, though not predominantly. Violence is the greatest impetus in the fragmentary episodes of *In Our Time*, and its shocks are borne by a lonely youth who learns to bear the unbearable only by self-control. The impulses to get revenge, to run away or simply to break out screaming, are largely suppressed by an unreasoning act of will. This self-control, combined with resignation, remains the principal virtue in *The Sun Also Rises*, where the narrator, Jake Barnes, reflects: "I did not care what it was all about. All I wanted to know was how to live in it." Despite its trappings of tragedy ("Give me a cup of sack to make mine eyes look red," Falstaff said, "that it may be thought I have wept; for I must speak in passion. . . .") *The Sun Also Rises* is largely social satire, a critical description of the values and behavior of a society from which Hemingway wanted to dissociate himself. The ability to love and to face death are idealized in the young matador, Romero, but he is never very real. Hemingway dramatized mainly the lack of Romero's heroism in Cohn, the social parasite, the lack of Romero's love in Brett, the nymphomaniac heroine, and the lack of Romero's honor in Mike, Brett's bankrupt fiancé.

It was in *A Farewell to Arms* that Hemingway first achieved a structurally coherent novel expressing his own values, and two of his three subsequent novels were largely devoted to rewriting and repeating the same idea. Death appears at the very start when Hemingway sets the scene and sounds a muted fanfare:

> Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. . . . Sometimes in the dark we heard the troops marching under the window and guns going past pulled by motor-tractors. . . . At the start of the winter came the permanent rain and with the rain came the cholera. But it was checked and in the end only seven thousand died of it in the army.

Love appears soon after, when Lieutenant Frederic Henry meets Catherine Barkley, an English nurse. Their first meeting is spent in unpleasant conversation; at the second, Henry gets his face slapped, but Catherine soon informs him that "I'd be glad to kiss you if you don't mind." After the kiss, Catherine promptly demands: "You will be good to me, won't you?" The third meeting, after an absence of a few days, takes us even further into fantasy:

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"Say, 'I've come back to Catherine in the night.' "
"I've come back to Catherine in the night."
"Oh, darling, you have come back, haven't you?"
"Yes."

There is only the briefest transition between this comic-opera "front" and the real front, where an enlisted man tells Henry, "There is nothing worse than war. . . . What is defeat? You go home." It is not a concentration of effect, but a violent leap into another world. Henry and his men are eating cheese when they are hit by a shell.

There was a flash. . . . I tried to breathe but my breath would not come and I felt myself rush bodily out of myself and out and out and out and all the time bodily in the wind. I went out swiftly, all of myself and I knew I was dead and that it was a mistake to think you just died. Then I floated, and instead of going on I felt myself slide back. . . . I thought somebody was screaming. . . . When I touched him he screamed. His legs . . . were both smashed above the knee.

This electric moment, which apparently re-enacts the wound Hemingway suffered at the age of eighteen, brings us back to the world of Ambrose Bierce. ("He stooped and laid his hand upon its face. It screamed.") But where Bierce was driven to relive his years of horror over and over, Hemingway withdraws again to the rear lines. Lieutenant Henry, the most numb of all Hemingway's heroes, makes no reflections on his experiences as he suffers himself to be carried back to a hospital, and the war recedes into the background as abruptly as it emerged.

Hemingway's best war stories—and war is really rather remote in almost all of Hemingway—deal not with the actual fighting but with the memories and aftereffects of fighting. Perhaps the best, "A Way You'll Never Be," describes Nick Adams wandering in a state of shell shock, refusing to wear a helmet because "I've seen them full of brains too many times." "In Another Country" is set in a hospital and begins with the statement that "the war was always there, but we did not go to it any more." Krebs, in "Soldier's Home," has suffered a more quiet and perhaps more permanent shell shock than Nick: "He did not want any consequences. He did not want any consequences ever again. He wanted to live along without consequences."

In *A Farewell to Arms*, Catherine Barkley appears at the hospital. Presto. "When I saw her I was in love with her. Everything turned over inside of me." This is the matter-of-fact approach for which Hemingway is famous. You are dead. Then you are not dead. You see a girl, your insides turn over, and you are in love. From then on, Catherine Barkley never talks about anything but love and sex, and talks interminably of these in the same kittenish way. ("You've such a lovely temperature.")

Catherine is one of Hemingway's most unreal creations and one of his most typical, for she represents an attempt to personify a false ideal. Many other writers—Hawthorne is an extreme example—have risked similar attempts, but the risk lies less in the method itself than in the quality of the ideal. Hawthorne, for example, could convey a kind of reality through Hester Prynne by the intensity with which he felt the idea of expiation. Fielding's attempts to personify the ideal woman provide a closer analogy, yet the quality of the ideal again makes an immeasurable difference. Amelia Booth, for instance, almost too wonderful, remains faithful to an unfaithful husband, raises money to pay his debts, beats off seducers, raises a swarm of children, and remains unfailingly charming. Stendhal's ideal woman, the Duchess of Sanseverina, is equally extraordinary, in a more grandiose and less domestic way.

Any heroine suffers by comparison, but Catherine Barkley suffers particularly because of the tawdriness of the ideal that she personifies only too well. On the last night of Henry's convalescent leave in Milan, he takes her to the inevitable hotel and she complains that "I've never felt like a whore before." Politely reassured that she is not a whore, she revives: "I'm a good girl again." The nothingness of Catherine Barkley was finally expressed in her announcement that "there isn't any me. I'm you." Robert Jordan had a similar suspicion that his dream girl might be "like the dreams you have when someone you have seen in the cinema comes to your bed at night and

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is so kind and lovely." Colonel Cantwell pushes this nothingness to its conclusion in *Across the River and Into the Trees* when he avows his love to Renata's portrait and even hears the picture answer back. The picture, after all, is no less real than Renata, another "someone you have seen in the cinema."

Henry, as a hero, is scarcely less vague, too passive to dominate the narrative, too unreflective to serve as observer. He is the K. of Hemingway's universe, the central cipher. He is typical in disguising his inadequacy by a meaningless worldliness. ("We drank a bottle of Capri and a bottle of St. Estephe.") Even when the hero is unheroic, the arcana of wines and foreign revolvers, street names in remote cities and special ways to catch fish, identify him as a man who has lived. They imply, as insistently as a black eye-patch, that he is stronger and wiser for his sufferings. An even more extreme example is Harry, the writer-hero of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," dying of gangrene on a hunting expedition to Africa, bickering with the wife who supports him, and agonizing over "the things that he had saved to write until he knew enough to write them well." The catalogue of his unexploited treasures is so completely trivial that it is hard to believe the critics who consider the story autobiographical. One item is described only as playing cards in a blizzard, another is a tiresome anecdote about love quarrels and a whore in Constantinople. There are undeveloped bits about trout fishing, about poverty in Paris, a murder by a half-wit, a man being hit by a bomb. Harry complains because his wife "dulled his ability and softened his will to work."

The whole story, as a matter of fact, had already been written somewhat better by Henry James a half century earlier. The tragedy of realization too late for achievement obsessed James all his life, and he compressed into *The Middle Years* a semi-autobiographical version of the idea that subsequently inspired both *The Ambassadors* and *The Wings of the Dove*. It was typical of James that he left implicit, in *The Middle Years*, what Dencombe had written or might have written. James made Dencombe's problem both simpler and more significant:

> What he saw so intensely today, what he felt as a nail driven in, was that only now, at the very last, had he come into possession. His development had been abnormally slow, almost grotesquely gradual. He had been hindered and retarded by experience, he had for long periods only groped his way. . . . At such a rate a first existence was too short—long enough only to collect material; so that to fructify, to use the material, one should have a second age, an extension.

The imminence of death brings Dencombe to an intense understanding of his crisis. He comes to realize that the universal belief in a little more time is as illusory as the idea of a "second existence." He realizes, in short, his own mortality, and his heightened understanding inspires his outcry: "A second chance—that's the delusion. There never was to be but one. We work in the dark—we do what we can—we give what we have. Our doubt is our passion and our passion is our task. The rest is the madness of art." Hemingway's protagonist, who never finally understands anything, addresses his last words to the figure of death. " 'You've got a hell of a breath,' he told it. 'You stinking bastard.' "

With a similar feeling toward the war, Lieutenant Henry leaves his mistress and heads back to the front. A major in his unit tells him, "It's been a bad summer." Hemingway skillfully concentrates the effects of the campaign in the disintegration of Henry's friend, Rinaldi: "All summer and all fall I've operated. I work all the time. . . . I never think. No, by God, I don't think; I operate. . . . This is a terrible war, baby." Rinaldi's surgery also emphasizes the catastrophe of the retreat from Caporetto, implying the same futile agony as the cholera that followed the marching men in the beginning. The retreat is a perfect subject for Hemingway's pictorial method, a somber mural of a defeated army moving through mud and rain. Hemingway's slow, careful description, with its emphasis on physical detail, is one of his triumphs.

But such mass movement is unbearable

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for a Hemingway hero, and Henry soon cuts across country, stopping to pick up two stragglers. When he gets stuck in a muddy road miles from nowhere, the two stragglers decide to go off on foot. Henry implies that they are deserting and calmly shoots them. This murder, which both Henry and Hemingway seem to consider an admirable act of justice, is an interesting prophecy of Henry's own fate. He is soon seized by some battle police who are executing retreating officers more or less at random. With the roles reversed, Henry retains his sense of moral outrage. Instead of denouncing the stragglers' lack of code, he now denounces "the efficiency, coldness and command of themselves, of Italians who are firing and not being fired on." Death, for the first time, is predictable, and one might think that the Hemingway hero would face the firing squad, in all its meaninglessness, with the disdainful smile of a Walter Mitty. But Henry, in this crisis, acts very humanly, flees, jumps in a river and swims to safety, buoyed up by his indignation and the morality of *sauve-qui-peut*. Symbolic critics have wallowed in the secret meanings of this desertion and flight—it is the cleansing by water, the baptismal rebirth, the purification for love or the return to the womb-symbol of life—but Henry himself states his new position with the same matter-of-fact simplicity that Hemingway habitually uses when a complex problem of motivation must somehow be evaded. "You had no more obligation . . . ," Henry tells himself. "I was not against them. I was through."

Once Henry has made his separate peace, the rest of the novel becomes sheer fantasy. Henry rejoins Catherine, by now well advanced in pregnancy, and they revel in a renewed sense of being "alone against the others." Catherine even congratulates herself complacently on her state of superiority over her best friend: "Think how much we have and she hasn't anything." The police close in, but the fugitives row across the lake to safety in Switzerland. There is more kittenish connubiality in the mountains, but the beginning of labor pains brings us back to the reality of battle again, and the long description of childbirth ends in hemorrhage and death.

Catherine's death, repeatedly anticipated by prophecies of disaster and symbols of death in fertility, still comes as a shock because of its meaninglessness. Why does Catherine die? And why does she die in childbirth? One can speculate that Hemingway wants to demonstrate the meaninglessness of life, but it would obviously be absurd to describe a meaningless world by writing something meaningless. One can speculate, more probably, that Catherine's death is simply the old-fashioned storyteller's conventional way of ending a sad story. One can speculate that Hemingway took a Biercean pleasure in killing off his dream heroine and blaming it on cruel gods. But the unanswered question of why things happen in Hemingway's work is more fundamental. Why was Henry in the war? Why did he desert? Why did he fall in love with Catherine? Or she with him? None of this is ever made clear, and similar questions arise in Hemingway's other novels.

Hemingway was once quoted by a reporter, Lillian Ross, as saying, "I learned to write by looking at paintings in the Luxembourg Museum in Paris." Such a declaration could be taken as posturing—on another occasion he claimed it was the Bible that taught him his trade—but the relationship of painting is very relevant to Hemingway's work, and partly explains the defects of *A Farewell to Arms*. Consider a fairly typical example:

> We drove fast when we were over the bridge and soon we saw the dust of the other cars ahead down the road. The road curved and we saw the three cars looking quite small, the dust rising from the wheels and going off through the trees. We caught them and passed them and turned off on a road that climbed into the hills. . . . We were in the foothills on the near side of the river and as the road mounted there were the high mountains off to the north with snow still on the tops. I looked back and saw the three cars all climbing, spaced by the interval of their dust. We passed a long column of loaded mules, the drivers walking along beside the mules wearing red fezes. They were bersaglieri. Beyond the mule train the road was empty

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and we climbed through the hills and then went down over the shoulder of a long hill into a river valley. There were trees along both sides of the road and through the right line of trees I saw the river, the water clear, fast and shallow. . . .

The passage continues in the same manner, the manner that has been admired for bareness and cleanness and simplicity. It is occasionally called "muscular." The later rhetorical Hemingway is only parody of this. As prose style, however, this specimen is scarcely very interesting. The vocabulary, the structure, the rhythm, are all humdrum. In terms of the development, shape or meaning of the novel, it adds nothing. Its only quality, in fact, is based on criteria of visual arts, of painting or photography. Although it lacks color, it is presumably an accurate description of what one would see if one were driving along that road. It leads the eye, not the mind, along in a certain direction. It picks out details the painter might emphasize, but avoids any reference to nonvisual forms of perception.

Hemingway obsessively repeats his determination to describe what "truly" happened, and his concept of truth is deliberately limited to the observable event, the casting of the trout fly or the shooting of the cabinet ministers, how it was done and what it looked like, what an observer could have seen. Even Hemingway's dialogue, what the observer could have heard, is kept free from any subtlety that might remain unheard beneath the surface of physical reality. At his best, Hemingway often resembles Delacroix, whose detailed studies of love and death explored every visible aspect of what truly happened. Despite every ingenuity of perspective, however, the pictorial technique is almost necessarily limited to surfaces. A woman whose husband has just been hit by a railroad train might look exactly like a long-confined lunatic, and neither the painter nor the photographer could distinguish between the two possible meanings of her expression of agony. The whole concept of causality, involving both reasoning analysis and a time sequence, is beyond their reach. Even the most "nonobjective" painter trying to paint an abstract emotion is forced to reduce it to a visible surface. But the primary concern of the writer, unlike the painter or the musician, must be meaning rather than beauty.

Hemingway himself outlined his technical methods, and implied their shortcomings, in *Death in the Afternoon*. He declared that he was having difficulty in "knowing what you really felt rather than what you were supposed to feel," and in putting down "what really happened in action." Now "what you really felt" is not a physical reality that can be painted "truly," because feeling obviously cannot be abstracted in this academic way from its various causes. What does the mystic "really feel" at the moment of ecstasy? Does it come from God? the Devil? hunger? desire? chills? sunstroke? neurosis? What does the artist "really feel" at the moment of creation, or the murderer at the moment of killing, and why? The unsuccessful attempt to describe and explain this in all its complexity is the writer's greatest task—"Our doubt is our passion"—and no other artistic method can even approach it. What you "really felt" is inevitably a combination of what you were supposed to feel, what you thought you felt, what you wanted to feel, what you were afraid to feel, what you rebelled against feeling, and an infinity of other reactions to the same stimulus. To simplify this, with crutches like "truly" and "really," is necessarily to oversimplify, and to oversimplify is to mistake and corrupt the whole purpose of writing. The great writer neither simplifies nor complicates but demonstrates the complexity itself. If Shakespeare had cast aside what Hamlet was supposed to feel, or if Dostoevsky had ignored what Stavrogin thought he felt, the result might have been scarcely superior to *A Farewell to Arms*. In American literature, the whole tragedy of *Moby Dick* is concentrated on Ahab's insane misconception of the white whale, the whole greatness of James's last work is based on the realization that motive and illusion are everything.

Reality is not essentially a physical thing, and it cannot be understood solely in terms

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of visible phenomena. This misconception of reality is the basis of Hemingway's romanticism, and his romantic view of both love and death. His supposed realism actually consists of describing his romantic concepts as though they were real.

A Farewell to Arms is in many ways the prototype of all Hemingway's novels, and the juxtaposition of love and death continues throughout his work. Both themes become such obsessions that they tend to merge into a Wagnerian confusion. Love, in this glow of greenish spotlights, is more intense through the imminence of death, yet helps to bring about death, yet turns death into the climax of the love affair.

"I was trying to learn to write, commencing with the simplest things," Hemingway declares in *Death in the Afternoon*, "and one of the simplest things of all, and one of the most fundamental is violent death." Hemingway characteristically avoids saying what is simple or fundamental about violent death. He describes death casually as "the unescapable reality," but his interest centers not in the meaning of death so much as in the methods and beauties of killing. He writes rhapsodically:

> A great killer must love to kill. Unless he is conscious of its dignity and feels that it is its own reward, he will be incapable of the abnegation that is necessary in real killing. The truly great killer must have a sense of honor and a sense of glory. . . . Killing cleanly and in a way which gives you aesthetic pleasure and pride has always been one of the greatest enjoyments of a part of the human race. . . . When a man is still in rebellion against death he has pleasure in taking to himself one of the Godlike attributes; that of administering it.

The creed of aesthetic and Godlike killing was best stated by the Marquis de Sade, in *Juliette*, as the effort to imitate a Supreme Being of supreme evil: "Dieu est très vindicatif, méchant, injuste. Les suites du mal sont eternelles; c'est dans le mal qu'il a crée le monde, c'est par le mal qu'il le soutient, c'est pour le mal qu'il le perpetue." Sade was logical in describing murder, which Hemingway has never quite approved of, as "one of the most precious laws of nature." Although Sade often sounds like one of Hemingway's characters, it has been argued rather persuasively by Edmund Bergler that the posturings of the sadist are only a disguise for the masochist's shame at his own weakness.

There are many rules involved in killing bulls, and Hemingway explains them at great length, denouncing the cowardice or incompetence of matadors who "assassinate" the bull without risking their own lives. This "code" of how to kill aesthetically serves as a disguise for the essential wrongness of the whole ritual. It ascribes morality to certain methods of killing because they are "aesthetic," and aesthetic because dangerous. Killing, never "great," never aesthetic, can only be justified when there is some need for it, and on such occasions there are no rules for making it beautiful. The only rule is to get it over and avoid needless pain. The so-called "laws of war," for instance, theoretically forbid torturing prisoners or killing women and children because these common practices are not necessary to win the war. But there is no law of war analogous to the "sporting" rule that you can shoot down birds when they are flying but not when they are sitting on a branch. It is only when slaughter is performed for the enjoyment of the killer, or for the enjoyment of paying spectators, that the rules of "sportsmanship" appear.

Hemingway was purely a spectator at the bull ring, but *The Green Hills of Africa* eliminated any possibility that his panegyric of the "great killer" might be simply an impersonal analysis. "It is pleasant," he says at the beginning of this autobiographical chronicle, "to hunt something that you want very much over a long period of time." As in the bullfight, there is a sporting code, rules to enable the sportsman to consider himself more Godlike than a hog-slaughterer. There is also nature itself, which the killer loves for reasons of his own. "I had loved country all my life," Hemingway reports, "the country was always better than the people." Hemingway would not have been the first man to enjoy the wilderness as a contrast to humanity, yet his enjoyment is less self-effacing than that of an eccentric

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nature lover like Thoreau. Hemingway repeatedly describes himself as "completely happy," and usually adds some reason such as "I knew that I was shooting well." And as for Thoreau, "I have not yet been able to read it." Hemingway's almost constant connection between nature and hunting recalls a similar relationship in Melville, who says at the very beginning of *Moby Dick* that going to sea is his substitute for suicide. Yet in Melville, as in Thoreau, there is an important difference. The voyage of the *Pequod* was an expedition for material gain, not sport, and the demented evil of Captain Ahab is concentrated in his passion to hunt for the sake of killing. But as for Melville, he was, as Hemingway tells us, a "writer of rhetoric."

Death in the Afternoon and *The Green Hills of Africa* are minor works of autobiography and adventure, but their violence reappeared as an important aspect of Hemingway's next book, *To Have and Have Not*. Despite many critical outcries against its episodic disorganization, this is in many ways Hemingway's best novel. The later chapters are cluttered with a platoon of unpleasantly sketched "society" figures, but Harry Morgan is the most genuine hero in any of Hemingway's novels. Neither sensitive nor self-pitying, like the repeated reincarnations of "the generic Nick Adams," he is the only protagonist who works for a living, supports a family and faces problems more serious than his own anxiety or perplexity. Unlike Barnes or Henry or Jordan or Cantwell, he acts through necessity, he does what has to be done rather than what he feels like doing. A Negro tells him, "You ain't human. You ain't got human feelings." But Morgan is driven by an understandable depression-era determination that "my family is going to eat as long as anybody eats. . . . I'm sore. I been sore a long time." This necessity gives even his most improbable acts a greater plausibility of motive than is ever achieved by the interior monologues of Hemingway's more autobiographical protagonists.

Morgan, who charters boats to anyone who will pay, agrees to take on four Cuban revolutionaries trying to make a getaway from a bank robbery, and as they start their voyage all five men know that at least one of them will be thrown overboard before it is finished. Hemingway is at his best when the rules have already been established. Morgan is outnumbered, but he is on his own territory. He can choose his own time and methods. Hemingway's quietly systematic description builds up an extraordinary tension until the crash of gunfire when all four bandits are killed and Morgan is fatally wounded. The anticipation and the shock are only half of this great scene, which reaches its culmination in Morgan's silent agony of endurance as the Gulf Stream rocks him slowly to death. Hemingway's passion for death embraces both the killer and the killed. The only time he surpassed this battle scene was in the two magnificent episodes of killing in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* —the massacre of the Fascists at the start of the Civil War and the massacre of El Sordo's Loyalist guerrilla band. The two episodes, one of the killers and one of the killed, both have that combination of passion, clarity and necessity that Hemingway so rarely achieves. They merge to form the essence of Hemingway's war world, a giant trap where there are no alternatives to death. In a state of permanent undeclared war, the same trap caught Harry Morgan, who both inflicted and suffered death on his tiny ship in the middle of the Gulf Stream.

Hemingway used a very moving restraint in describing the death of Harry Morgan, but there was no such element in "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," a brutal little study in sadism. Macomber, a rich sportsman, bungles a lion kill and then runs away. His hunter, Wilson, kills the beast efficiently, and the "predatory" Mrs. Macomber consequently slips into Wilson's bed when she knows her husband is still awake. Macomber, by now a pariah, becomes a hero when he chases some buffalo from an automobile, leaping out only at the last minute to assume a sportsmanlike stance while shooting them. Macomber, at the kill, "felt a wild unreasonable happiness that he had never known before" and "his face was shining." The toadying Wilson chimes in

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with a quotation from Shakespeare and mutters to himself that Macomber's heroism was "more of a change than any loss of virginity. Fear gone like an operation. Something else grew in its place. Main thing a man had. Made him into a man. Women knew it too." It is all a little too much for Margot Macomber, however. Hemingway makes it clear that she can't bear to lose her domination over her once-craven husand, so she shoots the newborn hero dead.

Gertrude Stein, without offering any evidence, described Hemingway himself as "yellow," and Hemingway's admirers have been explaining ever since that this is not true. Hemingway's personal courage, however, is a matter of comparative unimportance. In his writing, he has persistently treated Wilson's type of bravery as one of the essential virtues, and he has persistently described the efforts of the Macombers to suppress their cowardice and imitate the Wilsons. But what is it, exactly, that makes bravery a virtue? In evaluating, rather than simply admiring, one should perhaps distinguish between absolute courage and conditional courage. The first, which Hemingway insists on, involves a preparedness, a willingness—even, in its exaggerated form, an eagerness—to risk death, for no particular reason except that one exists in a situation where the risk has arisen. Conditional courage would involve an action for a specific end, sometimes for one's own safety, sometimes for the safety of someone else. An absolutely brave man would act bravely even though it was pointless, or even harmful; a conditionally brave man would be willing to behave like a coward if that would achieve the same end more surely. If a car is speeding down a street and a child is standing in its path, the man who rushes in and saves the child is brave by any standards. In absolute terms, however, the saving of the child is irrelevant; the same man would be just as brave if he leaped into the path of the same car when there was no child in the street. He might do it to show that he dared, he might do it for the thrill of danger, he might do it to win a bet, or for the sheer hell of it—these are considered valid motives for Hemingway's heroes. The difference—for bravery can be one of the greatest virtues—must lie in the motive and the purpose, which Hemingway apparently regards as unimportant. But Macomber's cowardice and Macomber's bravery, like the hypothetical man's leap into the street, raises the question of how and why he got into the situation of danger. If danger and bravery were ends in themselves, he might as well have become a steeple jack; it would be less sporting but more useful.

Various critics have attempted to connect Hemingway with Stephen Crane—whom Hemingway listed in *The Green Hills of Africa* as one of America's three "good writers"—but Hemingway has always ignored the chain of causes that underlies *The Red Badge of Courage*. Crane's young soldier, like Macomber, runs in terror from his first encounter with danger, but he regains his courage through a sense of comradeship and necessity, through the spectacle of his friend dying from wounds that he himself had escaped, and not from any easy massacre of Confederate soldiery pursued in an automobile. The youth's final courage comes in remembering his unthinking action after the second trial; but instead of Macomber's wild glee at killing, it is simply the realization that "he had been to touch the great death, and found that, after all, it was but the great death." Crane would never have made the grade as a great killer. Jack London would come nearer the mark.

The love of death casts a curious pall on Hemingway's scenes of love. The demise of Catherine Barkley almost eradicated love in Hemingway's work for more than a decade. Harry Morgan, even with one arm amputated, was alleged to have performed exceptional feats of sex, but Hemingway put a great deal more passion into the outcry of Mrs. Gordon, one of the "haves" who have nothing, when she screams at her husband:

> Love is just another dirty lie. Love is ergoapiol pills to make me come around because you were afraid to have a baby. Love is quinine and quinine and quinine until I'm deaf with it. Love is that dirty aborting horror that you took me to. Love is my insides all messed up. It's half catheters and half whirling douches. I know about love. Love always hangs up behind the

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bathroom door. It smells like lysol. To hell with love.

The same sentiment runs through Hemingway's short stories, which were never so romantic as his novels. Even in the early tales of *In Our Time*, women are an oppressive force to be feared and avoided, except as a temporary necessity. Krebs, in "Soldier's Home," "would have liked a girl if she had to come to him and not wanted to talk." "A Very Short Story," from which *A Farewell to Arms* was developed, ends, as logically as the novel, with the heroine being seduced by an Italian major and the hero contracting gonorrhea from a Chicago salesgirl in a taxi. Then there were "Mr. and Mrs. Elliot," who "tried very hard to have a baby . . . as often as Mrs. Elliot could stand it."

The quiet gloom of the young Hemingway, however, becomes more frequently hysterical in the short stories of the thirties. Breakups and divorces recur over and over, and with them the same self-pitying recriminations. Perversion is no longer a pathetic oddity but a sinister force. In "The Sea Change," for instance, the hero struggles futilely against his mistress' insistence on leaving him to have a Lesbian affair. They argue and bicker, as does virtually every other couple, married or unmarried, in Hemingway's stories.

"I said we could have everything."
"We can have everything."
"No, we can't."
"We can have the whole world."
"No, we can't."
"We can go everywhere."
"No, we can't. It isn't ours any more."
"It's ours."
"No, it isn't."

That is from "Hills Like White Elephants," which continues in the same tone until the girl says, "Would you please please please please please please please stop talking." But the same talking goes on and on, from one story to the next. The combination of bickering, perversion and estrangement that pervades Hemingway's short stories seems to contradict the exotic passions in his novels, but actually both extremes are based on the kind of distinction Hemingway makes between the masculine and the feminine. In the final sections of *A Farewell to Arms*, for instance, Frederic Henry and Catherine exclaim about their sense of unity in the Swiss mountains, but Henry frequently wanders off to take boxing lessons while Catherine fusses about her hairdo. The two preoccupations typify a consciousness of gender that becomes almost obsessive. While the ideal women become ever more vague and self-immolating, the ideal men go on from boxing to killing. But perversions take many forms less obvious than the ignorant caricatures of effeminate men with fluty voices and stern women with cropped hair. There are Lesbian beauties who have all the exquisite femininity ascribed to Catherine Barkley, and one often meets stranger men at prize fights than at any art galleries. It is here that one might recall Max Beerbohm's good-natured suggestion, in *Around Theatres*, that Rudyard Kipling must have been a woman.

> In men's novels you will find, for the most part, that virility is taken for granted. The male characters are men, and, so far as their creator can see, there's an end of the matter. But for a creatrix, there's only just the beginning of the matter. She *insists* that her male characters are men. . . . Into whatever circumstances of joy or sorrow she cast them, always they are acutely conscious of their manhood and acutely nervous of being mistaken for women. . . . In real life, men are not like that. At least only effeminate men are like that. The others have no preoccupation with manliness. They don't bother about it. That is the difference between them and the male creatures of female writers. . . . Manliness on the one hand, manlydom on the other. Manlydom: find for me, if you can, a word more apt to Mr. Kipling's heroes.

In Hemingway's short stories, the relationship of manlydom and what one might as well call womanlydom ends in a conflict which shows the lovers that they dislike each other. In the novels, the lovers generally vow to accompany each other to the ends of the earth, but once Harry and his wife are stuck in the shadow of Kilimanjaro on their hunt for unicorns it is perfectly natural for her to complain, "I wish we'd never come." The misery of the girl in "Hills Like White

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Elephants" is a similar whine at the shock of discovery that the world "isn't ours any more." When one reconsiders it, Jake Barnes's rather mysterious injury is a providential escape from these problems. Since Jake is impotent and Brett is the opposite, they can wallow in the possibilities of their idyl. If Jake had been equipped to spend the next twenty years trying to prevent Brett from running off with the milkman, it would be a less romantic story. Catherine Barkley's untimely death might best be explained as a similar escape from the drudgery of reality. Beautiful Catherine rinsing diapers in the toilet basin? Catherine with vomited oatmeal on her new dress? Catherine making love while the infant howls for its bottle? Catherine feeling not like a whore but like a nanny? No, there are good reasons for killing her off. Like the would-be bullfighter, in "The Capital of the World," who is killed in an imitation fight with an imitation bull, she died "full of illusions."

The total estrangement of men and women, even in the midst of their sexual prodigies, continues in *The Fifth Column*, a really extraordinary attempt at playwriting. The manly hero, Philip, is a dedicated GPU hatchetman during the Fascist siege of Madrid, who is himself besieged by a Vassar girl and a Moorish tart. Killing and sex are never dissociated very much in any of Hemingway's work, but nowhere are the two passions more closely connected than here. Philip's relations to both his women are almost wholly sadistic; his secret-police activity is largely erotic. Philip's acts of violence, moreover, are no longer controlled by the old Hemingway criteria of Godlike aesthetics. The GPU is simply pursuing its dirty business in its dirty ways.

Hemingway protests in good faith that he was never a Communist—and his mild criticism even provoked absurd complaints from Communist critics—but Hemingway's personal affiliations, like his personal courage, are not too important. Yet the attraction of communism for both Philip and Robert Jordan is typical of Hemingway's basically elitist sympathies. Despite their almost indecent sentimentality about their crusade, both heroes express contempt for the Communist propaganda that attempts to identify communism with democracy and the common people. Instead, their awed admiration centers precisely on the anti-democratic, the *Waffen SS* aspects of communism, its fanatical organization, discipline and apparent strength. This is the basis of Jordan's submission to communism as "the best discipline and the soundest and the sanest." Jordan—typical of the middle-class intellectual fellow-traveler whom George Orwell once described as "hungry for more power and prestige"—parodies Hemingway's efforts to describe truth in the bull ring when he describes the Russian headquarters as the place where "you learned how it was all done instead of how it was supposed to be done."

Robert Jordan, like Philip, divides his attention between a passionate Communist crusade and a master-and-servant love affair with a girl called Maria. Hemingway wallows happily through these Temptation-of-St. Anthony love scenes, and even attempts ineffectually to describe Jordan's thoughts during fornication on a hillside. There is also much mystical discussion of whether the earth really did "move out and away from under them," and what that may mean. Between Jordan's political fantasies and his romantic fantasies, it is a little hard to distinguish which is "real." But whenever there is a conflict between the dream of love and the reality of the outer world, Maria is cast aside as unceremoniously as Philip's girls, or any other Hemingway girl who interferes with manly pursuits. On one occasion, for example, a Fascist guard intrudes on the guerrilla camp and Jordan shoots him. Maria is still in Jordan's sleeping bag, but Hemingway observes that "she had no place in his life now." It has all the logic of *Corydon*.

Once Jordan's political mission has been accomplished and the bridge has been destroyed—in one of Hemingway's best pieces of journalistic narrative—the hero suffers a broken leg, refuses to go any farther, and waits to be killed off. It is as accidental and apparently mysterious a fate as that of Catherine Barkley, but there is as good a reason. Jordan had planned to marry Maria,

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"and when I get my job back at the university she can be an instructor's wife. . . . I wonder how they would like Maria in Missoula, Montana." It is probably safe to assume that they wouldn't, but the bickering life of a minor campus is easily cast aside in Jordan's grandiloquent scene of renunciation. "Thou wilt go now, rabbit," he says. "But I go with thee. As long as there is one of us there is both of us." Maria does not accept this, but there is nothing she can do about it. Jordan is staging the little melodrama, and as far as he is concerned the fantasy has been immortalized.

Jordan's declaration is curiously similar to the ending of *The Wild Palms*, which Faulkner had published about a year earlier. Faulkner, like James before him, handled Hemingway's material somewhat better. Charlotte Rittenmeyer dies because her lover, Harry Wilbourne, botched an attempted abortion. She dies far less willingly than Jordan, less romantically. After Wilbourne has been sentenced to fifty years at hard labor, Charlotte's husband offers him cyanide. Wilbourne, like Jordan, considers his love a reality that can live after death, but unlike Jordan he realizes that it can live only as grief. This grief is a burden which he does not try to shift onto someone else. "Because if memory exists outside of the flesh it won't be memory because it won't know what it remembers so when she became not then half of memory became not and if I become not then all of remembering will cease to be. —Yes, he thought, between grief and nothing I will take grief."

Both Hemingway and Faulkner began in 1940 a decade of silence which ended in the catastrophes of *Across the River* and *Intruder in the Dust*. Unlike Faulkner, Hemingway eventually achieved a piece of work as fine as anything he had ever done. Despite the acclaim it received as a "great novel," *The Old Man and the Sea* is not a novel at all in length, structure or conception. Instead, it recalls the subtle simplicity of narrative that typified Hemingway's best short stories. Like "The Undefeated" and "Fifty Grand," and like the battle episodes in the novels of Key West and Spain, *The Old Man and the Sea* was a story of basic conflict. These conflicts often appear to have no great significance, but Hemingway at his descriptive best can dramatize an isolated struggle with such intensity that its essence applies to all other conflicts. Immediate motives are eliminated altogether. Compared to the outpourings of *The Fifth Column* ("You do it so *everyone* will have a good breakfast like that"), there was a real dignity in the irrational dedication of Manuel, the gored bullfighter trying to make a comeback in "The Undefeated." " 'Why don't you get a job and go to work?' he [the promoter] said. 'I don't want to work,' Manuel said. 'I am a bull-fighter.' " Manuel apparently wins his first conflict with the world, with the promoter who doesn't want to hire him and the picador who doesn't want to work for him. His second conflict, with the bull, proves that the world was right: he *is* finished, but only by the world's standards, not by his own. He gets the bull, the bull gets him, but in his ordeal there is no victory and no defeat.

Jack Brennan, the boxer in "Fifty Grand," wins a similar original conflict by arranging with some gamblers to sell out his title and his career by betting against himself and making one last fortune. He is double-crossed by the gamblers and hit below the belt. Again, the first conflict was social and the second physical, but the final crisis is the internal conflict between the individual's will and his pain. Even in his agony, Brennan manages to deny that he has been fouled. Then he fouls his opponent so obviously and so violently that he loses the fight, and thus wins.

Like the battles of El Sordo on the hilltop and Harry Morgan in his boat, these struggles are described with a mastery that is almost serene. But the real universality of these stories lies perhaps in the heroes' sense of their own nature, and in the consequent sense of necessity in their actions. "I am a bull-fighter," as Manuel says it, sounds almost as though he were stating his own name. With a matter-of-fact illogicality, the words *Manuel* and *bullfighter* are almost synonymous in identifying the man and his purpose. Harry Morgan is similarly un-

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able to "get a job and go to work" because "there ain't any work at living wages anywhere."

These conflicts are dramatized in terms of killing, but in contrast to most of Hemingway's work the killing is almost incidental, not an end to be pursued for the pleasure of it, but a necessary part of one's profession or a necessary act of self-defense. The man who must kill leans on no crutches of aesthetic or pseudomoral self-justification. This relationship of necessity between the fighter and the fight makes each struggle representative of the human condition, for everyone exists in a similar, though less dramatic, state of conflict, which springs from a similar contradiction between one's identity and one's situation. The conflict goes on and on, and is never really won or lost. If one does what one must, and does it the best one can—this is the whole point of Hemingway's best stories—victory or defeat does not really matter. If one wins a brief triumph, a worse conflict will certainly arise from it, but a good man who endures and fights back remains undefeated even in defeat. Some of Hemingway's better-known heroes, such as Nick Adams or Frederic Henry, simply ran away from such conflicts. The triumphs in Hemingway's inferior work, the great killings and easy seductions, are only another aspect of the flight from conflict, another wishful solution to the insoluble.

Old Santiago, the fisherman in *The Old Man and the Sea*, has all the sense of profession, and the willingness to fight for it, that typified Manuel and Jack Brennan. It projects a combination of pride and craftsmanship which Hemingway still feels and can express indirectly about his own profession. Santiago's beautifully described chase and capture of the giant fish is only the apparent initial triumph. His greater conflict is his attempt to beat off the sharks that attack his fish while he is trying to bring it to land. He returns with little more than a skeleton, and the knowledge that he has done his best and will do it again. This was one of the rare successes of Hemingway's theory, in *Death in the Afternoon*, that "the dignity of movement of an ice-berg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water."

The same dignity of movement typifies the few other stories that have made Hemingway one of the best writers of his generation. "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place" dramatizes, with no dramatics, everything that Thoreau meant by "quiet desperation." All the less heroic aspects of the Spanish war were concentrated in the "Old Man at the Bridge," who simply said, "I am without politics. I am seventy-six years old. I have come twelve kilometers now and I think now I can go no further." There were similar insights in "The Light of the World," and even in "A Pursuit Race." The whole drama of the bullfight, which Hemingway tried and failed to convey in the repetitious rhetoric of *Death in the Afternoon*, was implicit in the humble catastrophe of "The Capital of the World."

But nobody ever became a rich and famous champion by remaining seven-eighths under water. Simplicity and accuracy and subtlety, which Hemingway himself attempts only rarely, are naturally alien to the admirers who applaud his most false and sentimental fantasies. The similarity between Hemingway and almost every worst aspect of American culture are so strong that one hesitates to blame everything on this occasionally great writer. The stoicism of the "code hero" has been corrupted, only partly by Hemingway, into inarticulate belligerence, and finally into a hatred of the very idea of thought or expression. The idea of clinging to such natural pleasures as food and sex, and the attempt to maintain some kind of personal standards against a world of brutality and fraud, have degenerated into a pseudo code that is both brutal and fraudulent. Hemingway's role in this corruption is impossible to assess exactly. To a certain extent his influence has been pervasive, to a certain extent he has simply expressed the ills of the world. On the one hand, he has been shamelessly used and misused by lesser writers; on the other, the misuse has returned to overwhelm him with a false conception of his own nature, his function and his greatness.

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *carries miscellaneous comments by readers and authors on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *1811 Q Street, N.W., Washington 9, D. C. Because of limitations of space, we cannot guarantee to print all letters received.*

—EDITOR

Your Summer issue carried an excellent exposition, "Political Compromise in France and America," which should help Americans appreciate the problems, and the merits, of the French political system. Its author, Philip Williams, is mistaken when he thinks that my understanding of the system is different from his own. Where we differ is in the value we assign to the facts we both recognize. This can be seen easily by anyone who happens to read my article, "America Seen From France," [AS: Spring, 1957] *after* reading his. For example, he admits that besides four faults the two democracies have in common, "France suffers in addition from a further vice, . . . governmental instability." But then he minimizes it. He recognizes, in a subordinate clause, that for the French, "effective reformist politics are impossible." To me, this difference between France and America seems extremely important, considering the terrible need for effective reforms in France. Is it illegitimate in weighing political efficiency to raise questions of economic progress and general welfare? There is a world of difference between compromise that brings about reform, thus preserving political stability, and compromise that blocks reform, thus opening the way for troublemaking by both Communists and Right-wing extremists.

My reaction to such differences should not be discounted by any departmental hostility to "literary and scientific scholars" who make "forays into the political field." We cannot afford to leave politics to the political experts; I have called attention to the danger of such parallels to "art for art's sake" as I have observed them in France. Even the expert may go wrong—for example, Professor Williams himself when he speaks of President Eisenhower "losing the congressional election of 1954." Strict political accuracy would realize that it is not the President who loses a *congressional* election; and even in a literary and metaphorical sense one could not say that of Eisenhower in 1954, as we know from his victory in 1956. Congress is not Parliament. Here Professor Williams has Anglicized our system. But usually he is so conscious of the distance of the British system from both the French and American that he fails to appreciate the distance between the two republics which are at the other two points of the triangle. Thus his essay, in spite of its merits, illustrates again the problem of getting perspective on America, which was, after all, the subject on which I focused my "America Seen From France."

JOSEPH E. BAKER
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

* * *

After having read Mrs. Record's "The Red-Tagging of Negro Protest" [AS: Summer, 1957] were I a rambunctious Southern fire-eater, I would rush to my typewriter, pound out a vitriolic letter to the editors, and wrathfully demand that my subscription be canceled pronto! But as I am neither an infant nor a moron, my reaction is that of a sorely troubled Southerner who, far from bitter resentment, soundly deplores the editorial discretion that authorized the publication of a controversial article whose erosive effect on the mind of the South will be comparable to that of a drop of water falling on a granite slab. A footnote informs the reader that Mrs. Record was

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born in the South and educated in Southern schools and colleges. Did the editors believe that this fact strengthens her argument? Coming at this crucial era when all conscientious Southerners are wrestling with a problem that Almighty God in His own good time will solve, the implicit imputation that the South as a unit is guilty of Communist-inspired Red-tagging of Negro protest is an instance of the "Achilles heel" fallacy too flagrant to ignore.

Edmund Burke told the English people that he did not know how to indict an entire nation. Mrs. Record presumes to do what the great statesman disclaimed. Because some loose-lipped Southerners have ascribed all anti-Southern agitation to Communist agents, Mrs. Record with complacency proceeds to lodge an indictment against the entire South, else why the title of her article?

At least one troubled Southerner wonders why Mrs. Record doesn't turn the spotlight on some of the North's unsolved racial problems instead of pecking away at the South. Dare she try to tell why New York still has its Harlem contrary to the "legislative" instructions of the Supreme Court? Would she advise the mayor to "break up" Harlem and require its citizens to move to apartments on Fifth Avenue and elsewhere? Maybe Mrs. Record could play the role of Good Samaritan in Chicago and help that distracted city to heal its racial sores; or she might take flight to Detroit and Indianapolis and show the perplexed citizens how summarily to banish racial leprosy. Until the editors of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR can see the racial mess in their own backyards cleaned up, it ill becomes them to print articles that offend the God-fearing, conscientious people of the South. First, let them cast out the beams in their own eyes, then. . . .

LABAN LACY RICE
Orlando, Florida

* * *

Is it not possible that America's emphasis upon the "common man" and the subsequent adjustment of our taste, values and judgments to his level are responsible for the "New Compassion" described in your Spring, 1957 issue by Edmund Fuller?

I believe that the American novelist's preoccupation with sex is conditioned by the fact that nothing interests the "common man" more than his own lecherousness, his own "problems," his own "real-life experiences."

Literature, the theater, as well as any art form—music, painting, sculpture—must transcend the commonplace. Art—the Bible, a Beethoven symphony, a Shakespearean drama, a Da Vinci, a Michelangelo—must transport us into an "uncommon" realm of beauty which we could not possibly capture among our many real problems; from that realm, not only do our problems become clearer and decrease in significance, but we reach our highest levels—man thinking, man contemplating, man reasoning, and finally man arriving at certain absolute moral and ethical values.

Could not our abstention from any moral judgments be traced to the "common man's" desire to avoid controversy, his quest for "security" and "guaranteed welfare," his unwillingness to sacrifice?

I am sure that one day an article will be written in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR linking the disease of the arts with Dewey's moral relativism, Freud's psychoanalysis, the substitution of "life-adjustment" for truth in the classroom (so eloquently stated by Gordon K. Chalmers in a recent article [AS: Spring, 1957]), and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's security-conscious, collectivist New Deal.

WALTER SILVERMAN
New York, New York

* * *

I am glad to see that discussions seem to be coming up more and more about the need to give a higher order of education to the top few of our most brilliant and scholarly youngsters in school and college.

In this democracy of ours it is natural that many people will object. They will say all men are created equal and, therefore, a distinction of this sort among our young people is undemocratic; that it violates one of our vital principles.

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Sometimes I think we do not appreciate that with the growth of the world the logic of our principles can change, and so likewise the principles themselves sometimes. George Washington made history by tearing loose a part of a nation from its mother country. Abraham Lincoln did exactly the opposite. We quite properly adjudge them both right. Principle, or at least the handling of it, had changed.

So it is with our principle of equality as it applies to education. It must be emphasized that to keep our country healthy and strong, to improve the leadership of the world, which we seem to have more or less, and to insure the future of our intelligence, we must reorient our thoughts on equality enough to gain an outstanding and small crop of really educated young people. Where will we be if we do not?

ROBERT W. DANIELS
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

* * *

I wish to express my delight with the high standards of practically all your articles. That, of course, should not mean that I agree with all of them. Yet, I have the impression that you select with care the contributors, and that you are using excellent judgment in preparing each copy.

As I look back over the copies as they have come to me during the last two years, I would refer especially to Daniel Boorstin's article "The Place of Thought in American Life" [AS: Spring, 1956], Skinner's "Freedom and the Control of Men" [AS: Winter, 1955-56] or Strunsky's "The Cult of Personality" [AS: Summer, 1956], to which I take exception. Singling out Boorstin's article, I cannot help but gain the impression that the author lacks sufficient European background to judge the problem of European education properly—either that or he must, for some unexplained reason, be so strongly impressed in favor of one and against another system that his article loses the appearance of a factual approach.

On the other hand, men like Granville Hicks, Gustave Weigel, Loren Eiseley and others write to my thorough satisfaction. What I always look forward to, though, is the chat of Mr. Krutch, "If You Don't Mind My Saying So." His articles alone are almost worth the entire publication.

It is good to know that there is a publication which keeps the reader's mind keyed up, and I always look forward to the next copy.

OSKAR GRUNOW
Vienna, Austria

* * *

I read with great interest the essay by Harlow Shapley in the Autumn issue [1956] of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. It seems to me that the problem raised in the last paragraph concerning the philosophical implications of the spectacular progress of modern astronomy was anticipated by the late Thomas Mann. He wrote:

> Astronomy, a great science, taught us that the earth is extremely insignificant in the turmoil of the cosmos; even in its own Milky Way it is to be considered as a tiny star floating at the periphery. This is doubtless correct scientifically, nevertheless I doubt that in this correctness the truth is being exhausted. In the depth of my soul I believe that to the earth belongs a share of a central meaning in the universe. In the depth of my soul I suspect that each "let there be," which brought forth out of nothing the cosmos and the creation of life out of inorganic being, was intended for mankind and that, by this, a big experiment was made, whose failure through mankind's guilt would amount to the failure of creation itself and to its refutation. May it be so or not—it would be good if mankind would behave as if it would be so.

E. GELLHORN
Santa Barbara, California

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